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A plodding pilgrim in the realm of rhyme,
A "star struck" singer of this sunny clime,
An humble private in poetic ranks,
Now craves your pleasure, and would hail your thanks.
Grant him at least but room amid the throng
To pour the passion of his simple song ;
And still believe though varied be his line
Sincerely and poetically — thine.

— *The Author.*

“Thou Beside Me Singing”

AND OTHER POEMS

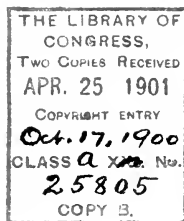
A Book of Verses

By

GEORGE F. VIETT

P. W. ZIEGLER & CO.
Philadelphia

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DEDICATED

A Memorial of the Departing Century,
A Greeting to the New,
and
A Salutation to
The Illustrious Victorian Age
Now Drawing to a Close.

1900—A. D.—1901

“Ne’er
Was flattery lost on poet’s ear;
A simple race! they waste their toil
For the vain tribute of a smile.”
—Scott.

“All other trades demand, verse-makers beg;
A dedication is a wooden leg.”
—Young.

“There is a pleasure in poetic pains,
Which only poets know.”
—Cowper.

“Sweet are the pleasures that to verse belong
And doubly sweet a brotherhood in song.”
—Keats.

“The Poet’s license!—’tis the fee
Of earth, and sky, and river
To him who views them royally,
To have and hold forever!
—Saxe.

PREFACE.

From out the obscurity of a narrow, uncongenial, and particularly unpoetical environment is launched this latest "Book of Verses," a little newcomer which has been the subject of many a day dream of promise by its indulgent parent.

Knowing well his limits and therefore disclaiming all approach to transcendent quality or world-firing ability, the author yet fondly believes that his lines possess intrinsic merit sufficient to commend them to the best literary circles, and to the indulgent consideration of the highest critics. For what errors of construction or omission may appear, he offers in extenuation the very limited education obtained in the face of obstacles well nigh heart breaking.

Then again, leisure and freedom, at least in a degree, are necessary to the proper performance of any literary or artistic work. Opportunity for the perusal of the best literature, access to well stocked libraries where lore and legend of the past can be absorbed, are likewise indispensable to serious effort at higher poetical composition.

All this, unfortunately, has not fallen to the author's lot. Affliction added to the pressure of poverty has operated to almost strangle talent ere its inspiration could rise. Anxiety, not alone for the future, but for the very present

PREFACE.

is by no means conducive to success in the field he has thus recklessly invaded. But having labored under such conditions, having passed the outer sentinels who stand guard at the domain of the poets, and produced what is here offered, gives quiet assurance that a spark of the "divine fire" is his portion, that the children of his fancy yet unborn will attest it, if the living do not.

Therefore upon the waters of opportunity is this little venture cast, solitary and friendless, it is true, but in the hope that the haven of "Good Will" is not far off.

Were artistic excellence alone aimed at, the author is free to confess that there are a few poems in this collection which his desire and judgment would have prompted him to leave out. He regrets to admit, however, that the venture is not altogether one of sentiment, for while sentiment has indeed governed the writing, profit has partly prompted the publication, and a book to sell, must have some diversity of taste, and must also have quantity as well as quality.

Trusting that this latest ripple upon the great ocean of literature may meet with a kind share of the public recognition and patronage, I remain, faithfully yours,
GEORGE F. VIETT.

AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

In the path of poetical aspiration the ambitious author encounters many obstacles, none however more distressing to the spirit than to suddenly be confronted in cold black and white with a sentiment of his own, expressed in almost identical language by some poet of the past. On more than one occasion has this occurred, and indeed has necessitated the discarding of work which the author had congratulated himself upon. In producing a volume of the description here offered, the patient toiler is beset by all the different emotions which soothe, ruffle or cheer the soul of humankind. At one moment he is the creature of exhilaration and hope, and the next the victim of doubt and despair, and the very depth of the latter condition is felt upon discovering that some child of his fancy is but an adopted one. Not only does he suffer in the actual loss sustained, but there comes the haunting dread from the bottom of a plagiarism hating heart that some of his best thoughts might be but the echo of music long since sounded in the temple of memory. But as from the vintage of adversity the wine of consolation is oftimes distilled, so a balm is found in bitterness, and solace and encouragement comes in knowing that the modern English poet must realize above every other literary aspirant the truth of the adage "that there is nothing new under the sun." In the dim ages to come, when mankind has ad-

AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

vanced to a grandeur of intellect when none will be below the level of a Burns or a Bryant, then, and then only, may we expect to see some master mind leave his fellows as Shakespeare has left us, transcend the limits of our present literary solar system, and find another tongue and another world in which his seraphic fancy may roam.

Indeed in these days of voluminous writings, when every inlet, creek, river and rill has been explored, when in the world of literature there remains no virgin forest for the ambitious pioneer, it is no little merit to produce a poetical work of some magnitude and steer clear of encroachment on the preserves of others, a quicksand into which the latest comer, for obvious reasons, would be the most liable to fall.

Promiscuous poaching upon the prose pastures of literature often passes unnoticed, but the very nature of poetry is such as to emphasize plagiarism. The robber of the one has an immense field and a free hand, while the poetical plagiarist is confined to a limited and a well guarded domain wherein his trespassing is doomed sooner or later to detection; hence it follows that the path of the poet is pregnant with danger, and he needs must be alert indeed, to steer his literary craft clear of collision on the crowded sea of song.

Above all things desirous of originality, the author has strenuously striven to avoid any such encroachment; if he has done so in even the slightest degree, the fault is one of poor memory and not one of deliberation. If any credit is due him for the little work here presented, he wants the full measure of it alone, and undivided, and desires to stand or fall by his own guns.

AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

It has been said truthfully that in the matter of giving expression to thought, in the matter of the coinage of the mind through the medium of the pen, Shakespeare has made beggars of us all; not only did he absorb the past, but he anticipated the future; he has thought, and said it all; so well indeed, as to leave no room for improvement. When one thinks in addition of the many illustrious minds who have followed him, the wonder is that there would be any adventurous enough to set his little flickering candle among their brilliant lights. But with the fortitude born of poetic fervor the author of this has seen fit to do so, and though these remarks may be judged in the nature of "much ado about nothing," still, it is with hope, trust and trepidation that he leaves his fate in the hands of press, public and critics.

Reverentially and humbly bowing at the shrines of those sweet singers who have preceded him, meekly acknowledging the obligation of their guiding light and confessing the very humblest his teacher and master, he can only hope that none would set him up for comparison alongside of their surpassing excellence.

As to the living poets he says: Gentlemen, I am comparatively young; I have labored handicapped in environments where conditions have been not only unhelpful but distinctively hostile to artistic ambition. With a brightened prospect, I may do better, therefore I ask that you bear with me, and help temper the cold blast of criticism to the shorn scribbler that comes among you.

GEORGE F. VIETT.

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The Poet's Pilgrimage.

AN INTRODUCTION.

Through the land of Solitude,
O'er the dreaming flowers,
To the "Fane of Fancy Free"
Girt with restful bowers.

Through vernal ways of Solitude,
Warm with Heavenly fire;
Rich in goodly plentitude,
He found the "Heart's Desire."

* * * *

Disqualified by fiat of Fate
To follow Fashion's flock,
Lamenting o'er my lonely state
There came a modest knock

Upon the door that led outside
To ways of noise and din,
I rose—and threw it open wide,
A lovely Dame walked in!

Of pensive eye and gracious mien,
Of stately form divine;
Methought that never had I seen
One of such glance benign.

"Lady pardon me," I said,
"Wherefore your mystic call,
My friends are few, none such as you
E'er grace my humble hall."

"I come" said she, "with gifts in hand,
Which you will not refuse,
I come from an Enchanted Land!
For know—I am your Muse!

"The lines upon thy brow doth show
Much saddened contemplation;
To change thy state I come, and bring
A kindlier dispensation.

Again you'll wade in crystal streams,
Again you'll roam the wild wood;
Again you'll dream untainted dreams,
The dreams of sweetest childhood.

And like the incense of the morning,
Like the perfume of the rose;
Like the day dreams of the dreamer,
So shall come thy heart's repose.

And a singer, thou shalt linger
Where divinest music swells;
Music that comes dripping, dripping;
Drop, by drop, from Heavenly wells.

And many hearts to music set,
And many souls to song;
But thou alone shall voice the strain
Of all the surging throng.

Thou shalt read the revelation
'Tween the lines of nature's lore,
That this world is but a station
On the road of "Evermore."

I will take thee from the borders
Of the dreary realm of Death,
To airy fields of light romance;
Within a single breath.

I will tune thy soul to music
Which a Seraph might surprise,
Lying lighter on thy list'ning ear
Than love in lover's eyes.

Music, which the Maker,
When the world had made its choice,
Left us in this pit of darkness
As remembrance of his voice.

And sometimes sad the music,
That in the soul shall sound,
Sad and soft as tears that fall
On a baby's tiny mound.

Yet, thou shalt hear with equal cheer
What time the earth is riven,
The deaf'ning boom of the Bell of Doom!
And the silvery chimes of Heaven.

The Poet's path is paved with pain,
And well indeed thou'lt know it;
But he must falter not, who'd gain
The "star born" name of "Poet."

The firmer fortitude that finds
A way, though barriers loom;
I give thee, and of many kinds
Shall be thy garden's bloom.

A Freelance in the Realm of Rhyme,
Take my "poetic rage,"
And seek the tourney field of Time,
With thy light lance of language.

Metallic strain of baser ore
The precious ones pollute;
Thy pen, a wand of alchemy,
All potent to transmute.

I charge thee take Sin's challenge up
When in thy face 'tis flaunted;
And though perhaps thou fight alone,
Fight on! fore'er undaunted.

"A Poet! Poor misguided youth!"
Heed little what they name thee;
Thou'lt dignify thyself and friends,
And make them proud to claim thee.

And no black art shall be thy part,
No trick, or necromancy;
Thou'lt send abroad with Wisdom's chart
Bright children of thy fancy.

Continued though thy toil may be,
Make no mistake about it,
The functions of great Destiny
Were incomplete without it.

While waging war with weariness,
Despair may o'er thee creep;
Ask then the blessed armistice,
The armistice of "sleep."

But in thy strife with weariness,
Fight to the latest breath;
For know—surrender simply is
Another name for Death!

Should proud Contumely bruise thy heart,
And thy lone spirit fret;
Know that it is the better part
To pardon—and forget.

What though the envious should annoy,
By Malice all directed;
And claim thy gold full of alloy?
This too,—must be expected.

He that seeks the sea's clear depths,
Cares nought for muddy shallows.
He that hides no blood stained hands,
Fears not the gloomy gallows.

And though the lingering shadows flit,
You'll read the promise glorious,
Of brighter day divinelier lit,
When Right shall be victorious!

And this you'll know though earth bestow,
Neglect, reproach upon thee;
The chosen few will shed the dew
That Heaven above wills on thee.

"So go, dear Protege of mine,
And in thy fancy free,
I'll take thy hand, and half divine
My blessings are," said she.

And then she left me, this fair dame,
But always at my yearning
She comes, and fans the smouldering flame
That's ever in me burning.

Therefore I've trod where Poets tread,
I've felt their joy and sorrow;
I've searched the blue sky overhead,
And probed the mystic 'morrow.

I've wandered ways where few intrude,
I've read signs deeply hidden;
I've broke the world's great solitude
Alone, and all unbidden.

I've followed where bright Fancy led,
And much his light did borrow;
I've learned the lore of "Yesterday"
"To-day," but not "To-morrow."

Once at the shrine of Nature I
Did pray for keener vision;
And learned with many a heart-felt sigh,
The best, I had been given.

I've swirled in whirl of trouble's tide,
Through the land of Desolation,
But anon I crossed the harbor wide,
To the haven—Consolation.

Tempestuous is the sea of life,
Lashed 'neath Misfortune's blows;
But still the tide Serenity,
Flows by the shore Repose.

I've scratched my name on the gates of Fame,
As many have done before me;
But with pass unsigned, and meagre claim,
I fear the proud Dame will ignore me.

I've drained of the bitter of desolate creeds,
That many have sought to prove me;
But I drink now of One that serves all needs,
And have no false gods o'er me.

Wisdom comes with the waning years,
By heedless youth retarded,
At last through a vista of trouble and tears,
She comes to be regarded.

Pride dwelt some little time with me,
Would perhaps have lingered longer,
But humiliation came, and she
Found Pride was not the stronger.

Ambition came, my heart did flame!
I joined his maddening race;
But found at last it was too fast
For my poor cripple's pace.

Close communion with cross Care,
At last to us discloses
The fact, that life, though sometimes fair,
Is not a bed of roses.

No stranger though to Joy I've been,
I've roamed some happy sands;
I've known the love of kindly kin
And touch of baby hands.

Sweet suppliant to the throne of Grace,
My Loved one went before me,
And so robbed Death of half his sting,
Such doth my love assure me.

Calamity, Remorse, Regret;
Those nettles in life's garden;
Must line the path of care and fret
That leads to Land of Pardon.

Though poverty made me acquaint'
With pangs of deprivation;
Yet still I read, though sore and faint,
'Twas for my soul's salvation.

And though Affliction's blighting hand
Is ever to me clinging;
It serves to open wide my mind
And set my soul to singing.

Brimful of sympathy the heart
That guides the Poet's pen;
The one who sings the better song,
Must love his fellow men.

That "God is Love" all things above
And in this lowly station,
Attest indeed, and of that truth
Make wondrous confirmation.

Sometime, Somewhere, there's recompense,
And if not "Here," "There" it must be;
And it shall come, though clouds are dense,
Sometime, Somewhere.

And whether 'tis the heaving wave,
Or mankind's ways I scan;
I find the soul-delight I crave
In reading God's great plan.

I read that Justice underlies
Each path, and part, and portion;
And that the creed this truth denies
Was born of Sin's abortion.

The grasping hand that never gives,
Must know some restitution;
The soul that all sin sodden lives
Must meet with retribution.

The murderer can never lie
In peace by his poor victim,
If this world's court he passes by,
There's One that will convict him.

And so good friends, you sought to know
Why I became a Poet;
I trust that to your vision keen
This little book will show it.

* * * *

Through the Land of Solitude,
O'er the dreaming flowers;
To the Fane of Fancy Free,
Girt with restful bowers.

Through vernal ways of Solitude,
Warm with Heavenly fire;
Rich in goodly plentitude,
I found the "Heart's Desire."



STILL WATERS.

Beyond the clouds the stars are shining,
Check despair with sturdy will;
Beneath those waves in fury raging
Are placid depths,—forever still.
Sore beset and heavy laden,
For thy soul there seems no haven;
The world doth mock at thy distress,
The heart of man seems merciless.
But stars still shine beyond the clouds,
Weary pilgrim mount the hill;
Thou shalt see stretched out in splendor
Placid depths,—forever still.

Pilgrim, Peace! the rainbow's set,
He will give His loved ones rest;
From a world of care and fret
God will call when He thinks best.
What though life be dark and dreary,
There is rest for all that weary.
If righteousness hath been thy guide
Then is the whole world vain beside.
Pilgrim, Peace! the rainbow's set
O'er a world of care and fret.
God will give His loved ones rest
When He deemeth it is best.

Along the path of high endeavor,
We learn the truths He would instill;
Beneath the raging conflict ever
Are God's own depths,—forever still.
Pilgrim sad! and Pilgrim weary!
What though life be chill and dreary?
He that marks the sparrow's fall
Is Lord of one and Lord of all.
Keep the path of high endeavor,
Learn the truths He would instill;
Beneath the raging conflict ever
Are placid depths,—forever still.

The tempest's voice is full of woe,
Its blast is cold, and drear and chill;
But 'neath the mantle of the morning
Are placid depths,—forever still.
Angry waves would overwhelm,
But Christ himself is at the helm;
There's haven for the storm tossed soul,
From world of shame is won the goal.
Beyond the tears that ebb and flow,
Beyond the tempest's voice of woe,
Is seen the purpose of His will,
And placid depths,—forever still.

FLITTING FANCIES.

A line of disconnected thought on things sentimental, satirical, philosophical and humorous; after the style of Cowper.

A cheerful face—not one of woe
Will find for you as on you go,
The line of least resistance.
The road may be both rough and long,
But laughter interspersed with song
Will dwarf the distance.

The crystal stream with flowers decked
Will not the smile of Heaven reflect
If stirred the mud below.
Then wherefore should we stir contention,
And cause vain turmoil and dissension?
Perhaps make a friend a foe.

Time was when hogs content with swill
Of that alone would take their fill
Serene in swinedom boarding.
The modern hog's a different breed
He know's a flower from a weed,
And dines according.

So if you pen some matter bright
Be sure and get a copyright,
Or you may loss bemoan.
Reject with scorn, then without fear
Some chap will publish your idea
As substance quite his own.

Not that I would presume to say
That I have suffered much this way—
Yet have upon occasion.
For some there are who do not shirk
To steal their neighbor's mental work
By turning and abrasion.

"Silence is golden," wrote the sage,
But fools have lately scanned his page
And caught his meaning;
So now to silence they're inclined,
With tether on their tongues they find
Convenient screening.

So all you hear where'er you go
Is surly "Yes," or snubby "No."
For all the fools are wary.
With affectation's garb content
They see no reason to augment
Their scant vocabulary.

My aim is high—a shining mark;
Nor would I choose vocation dark
To change my poor condition.
To dignify myself and friends
By that rare grace which poetry lends,
Is sure' a chaste ambition.

I've seen a work of merit pass
Unheeded, by some pompous ass
In high position.
One weakness of this glorious nation,
Is setting fools above their station;
A sad condition.

I've found the educated snob
Whose envy does his reason rob,
An oft' vexation;
He thinks that he has power to ban!
But never was a foolish man
More sad' mistaken.

The age and place we should deplore,
Where talent tramps from door to door
For approbation;
And finds the frequent parvenu
Inflicting from his narrow view,
Humiliation.

When life has been in folly spent,
Then comes the time we fain repent
Of folly's consequences.
There's much we gladly would unlearn
When sin we face at every turn,
To grieve our better senses.

I sometimes muse and fondly dream
That I might rise to heights supreme!
Vain inspiration.
For then anon with soul afret
I plainly see my limit set
In humble station.

But after all I'll vex me not,
Nor murmur at my destined lot,
For Fate is unrelenting.
And fame and gold are things of earth,
In sin-strewn soil they had their birth,
Their lack scarce worth lamenting.

To walk in wisdom's ways aright,
One needs must trace a shining light
Unswervingly consistent.
Athwart the path of high endeavor
The world's base ideals stand forever
Presumptuously persistent.

Give not your wild and mad acclaim
To something that is but a name
'Thout rhyme or reason,
For sympathy that's fool encased
Is always sympathy misplaced
And out of season.

Pause! and ponder while you pause
Upon the wisdom in this clause
From Shakespeare quoted—
"Brag not, for it must come to pass,
That every braggart is an ass."
A truth well noted.

The false and true make no contact,
A fact must ever be a fact,
That's all about it;
And Truth and Common Sense together
Are anchors proof for any weather,
And never doubt it.

The transient gain a lie may lend
Avails but little in the end,
Nor can you claim exemption
From drafts the Devil draws at sight;
Hell's credit gets you in a plight
From which there's no redemption.

Clear-eyed Truth, a beauteous dame
Whose glance puts hypocrites to shame,
Stands ever near us.
And with the doubting soul she pleads,
And pours the balm which Conscience needs;
To soothe and cheer us.

I often wonder, when I'm dead
If vandals o'er my grave will tread
And steal the flowers.
And what I'll do the winter through
(When birds are gone and flowers few)
To pass away the hours.

Maybe some industrious mole
Will make a little deeper hole,
On me intrude.
Would that he'd come for pity's sake
With message from my love; to break
That solitude.

I know no greater soul delight,
Than contemplation 'neath the night
When glows the Milky Way.
'Tis then desire and soul surcease
Blend in with God's eternal peace,
To make me pray.

WHEN SETS MY SUN.

No doubt you're tired of my lament
Whereat I very much repent
And ask reprieve.
But should you not dislike my rhyme,
We'll meet again some other time
By your kind leave.



WHEN SETS MY SUN.

The sunset's flush is mellow o'er the earth,
The glory deepens in the western sky;
While in the pensive east
The world of night
With solemn tread advances.
Now gentle grasses wave a fond adieu,
Now soft laments from feathered throats are rung,
And all the world obeisance makes
Before the splendid passing
Of the mighty Prince of Day.
'Tis now the hour of the heart's tranquility,
The hour of the soul's sweet softening,
The hour when the Spirit of Omnipotence
Doth summon to the council
Of His silent sessions,
The recreant heart of man.



“The hour of the soul's
sweet softening.”—*Page 38.*

And as the shadows deepen
And the gentle twilight falls,
Our willing thoughts prepare a way
For Memory's feet
Adown the velvet aisles of retrospect.
And in this mood I sit and muse
Upon the ways of Him who maketh no mistakes,
Who gives no hope without fulfillment,
Who marks the simple sparrow's fall;
Who tempers the white hot sword of vengeance
In the cooling fount of His great mercy.
Of Whom 'tis writ that He
Will come to judge the living and the dead.
 'Tis thus I ponder on the prospect
Which my solitary soul shall see
When sets my sun—a trembling thing
In the vast ocean of Eternity.

LOVE CONTRARY.

Full long have I loved you
'Mid pleading and plaint;
What spirit hath moved you
My heart to acquaint
 With love sown in gladness,
 With love grown in sadness?
 With love mown in madness!
Oh! tell me sweet saint?

LOVE CONTRARY.

I love and adore thee
As no tongue can tell;
Why wilt thou ignore me
And hurl me to hell?
 Oh, give me one token!
 One promise soft spoken;
 My heart's yet unbroken,
Oh, ring not its knell.

Nay! pause love, and ponder
Upon my lone state;
The waste I now wander;
And thou Heaven's gate!
 Within bells are ringing,
 God's angels are singing,
 See—love's key I'm bringing!
Oh, bid me not wait.

Light hearts grown heavy,
Proud heads have bent;
Heart links have sundered,
Relent, love, relent!
 Love unrelenting,
 Love unrepenting,
 Love unlamenting;
Wherefore such intent?

'Mid dark desolation,
I turn to thee still
For love's consolation,
Its joy and its thrill.
 Love soul refining,
 Heaven divining!
 My love declining—
What is thy sweet will?



THE TIDE THAT SERVES.

"The tide went out—"
Freighted ships of steam and sail
Turned willing prows from moor and dale,
"Went out with the tide."

The tide went out—
Some flotsam and jetsam of our days,
Some driftwood left for other bays,
Went out with the tide.

The tide went out—
The anger pent within our breast
No longer at its moorings rest,
On passion's tide went out.

The tide went out—
An aching void with sadness rings,
Some sweetness in our life took wings
Went out with the tide.

Love's tide went out—
And with it went the pure intent,
The sweetness in our nature pent,
The wealth of soul, the proud head bent,
Went with Love's tide.

Life's tide went out—
And many of this world were free.
Some day 'twill serve for you—for me,
We'll drift out to the shoreless sea—
When our tide goes out.

The tide came in—
But the harbor is small, the ocean great
And some found not the narrow gate,
Came not in with the tide.

Love's tide came in—
And at our feet its waters fling
A baby shape, a tiny thing
Came in upon Love's tide.

Life's tide came in—
But none that runs through raging main
Will serve to bring us back again.
To haunt again the path of pain,
No tide will bring us in.

SUNSHINE TO-MORROW.

What though the clouds lower in threatening array,
And the journey is rough through a desolate way?
Keep on! There'll be time yet for rest and for play,
The sun may be shining to-morrow.

Thy burden's perhaps heavy, the way may be long,
But step forward bravely with laughter and song,
The world makes a way for the steadfast and strong,
The sun may be shining to-morrow.

"There's no use repining," my uncle would say,
"For where there's a will there's always a way,
And though it is cloudy and raining to-day,
The sun may be shining to-morrow."

When fate pulls against you and leaves you forlorn,
And you ask why in thunder you ever were born,
Just go to your bed, arise with the dawn
To find that the bright sun is shining.

What seems solid gold may be nothing but gilt,
There's no use lamenting the milk which is spilt,
If it wasn't for rain the sweet flowers would wilt,
To-morrow the sun may be shining.

If rascals should rob you, and proud men should scorn,
And make your soul bitter, your heart quite forlorn,
Forget not, my brother, each night has a morn,
And to-morrow the sun may be shining.

After Old Song.



NO "NEGLECTED BURNS" AM I.

Dedicated to some condescending Norfolk "literary lights" ? and a few "patronizing" self-appointed critics.

Whether it be spoke or writ
I cannot tolerate the wit
That seeks to make a cruel hit
At some poor chap's expense;
It savors much of venom spit,
And lack of kindly sense.

At least as soulful as myself
I judge my neighbor. Nor his wealth,
Nor poverty, nor even stealth
 Will serve to change me;
But when I find him wrapt in self,
 That does estrange me.

While of my work there may be doubt,
And while I'm loath my claims to shout;
I'll let your betters find them out,
 And take appeal
From judgment of a clumsy lout
 By a great deal.

No poor "neglected Burns" am I,
Nor Shakespeare in obscurity;
And while I'm not 'tis plain to see
 A Milton immature;
Thou, in a fool's security
 Art set, beyond all cure.

My worth is past your computation,
From you I need no consolation,
Why man! you'd make a reputation
 And doubtless make it pay,
With stuff that from my compilation
 I've long since thrown away.

At Byron's bays I've no pretense;
I like to rhyme and rhyme with sense.
Let merit judge my competence,
 Whate'er my due.
And let this be my compliments
 To likes o' you.



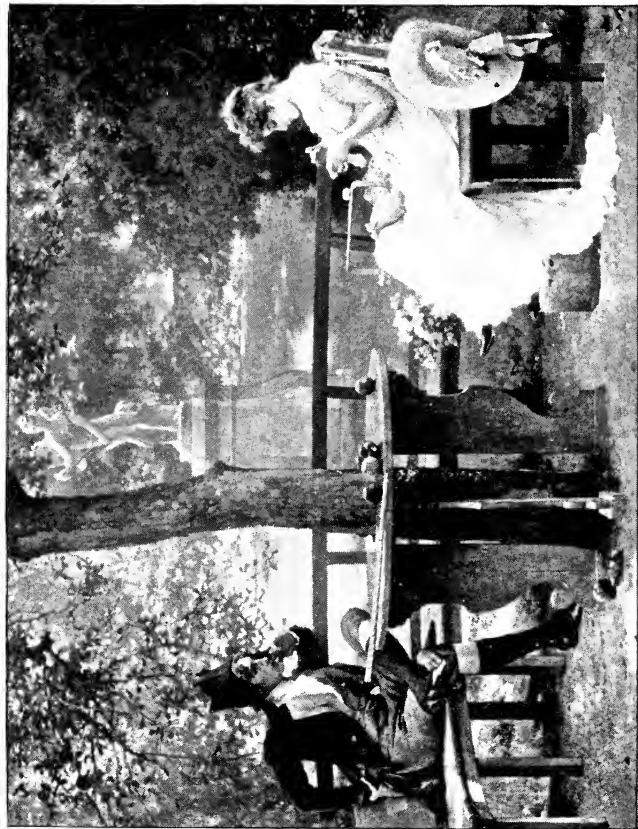
SOME FIFTEEN YEARS AGO.

On meeting an old schoolmate and chum after many
years, far from early scenes.

Dear Ned, old boy! I'm glad to see your bright familiar
 face,
It's like a ray of sunshine in this somewhat dreary place;
Not many friends of boyhood's days now often cross my
 way,
And they that do I grieve to say, have little time to stay.

The years have passed between us, Ned, and you and I
 are men,
And boyish confidence and hopes we'll never share again;
But still in retrospection there's a chastened, purer joy,
So let us talk of days pure gold, that needed no alloy.





“What is thy sweet will?”—Page 43.

In that sunny city of the South our childhood's days were
spent,

Her waters and her woods about, sweet influence have lent
To make a golden framing for pale memory's silhouette,
To soothe the care of later years, the heart ache and the
fret.

There's the dear old Bennett public school, what scenes it
does recall

With its thousand lusty youngsters who knew us one and
all;

For a finer set of teachers you might search the wide
world o'er;

But one of them I loved the best, God bless her, is no
more.

Remember how with bands galore the soldiers marched
away

To celebrate George Washington, and on Palmetto day?
And what a show the old town made in "Gala Week" the
first,

It seemed the very cobble stones their ancient bonds
would burst.

And when British guns were booming and St. Michael's
bells did clash,

And Charleston's troops in gay array did cut a glittering
dash;

We were in the crowd that followed them down to the
Battery seas,

To cheer Her Royal Highness off, the sweet Princess
Louise.

Trolley cars! Is that a fact? Why, bless my soul, that's
news,

The one mule car was all I knew on streets and avenues;
They were never in a hurry and along did slowly glide,
And only those with leisure could afford to take a ride.

Methinks the boys of our days, these later times can't
match,

They play at little girlish games and cry at every scratch;
How often, Ned, on summer days, two youngsters, you
with me

Have taken our frail open boat just fifteen miles to sea?

Nor did we count it any task to swim a mile or more,
And stay all day a-catching fish some dozen miles from
shore;

And the "kid" that couldn't go to mud in twenty feet of
sea,

Was not the kind of "kid" it took to follow you or me.

But some there were, our dearest chums, most reckless of
the lot

Who striving to excel the crowd their prudence quite for-
got,

And many friends of yours and mine—the boys that we
loved best,
Beneath the waves round Charleston Bay, have found
their last, long rest.

And you were by my side that night—the earthquake's
dreadful hour!
When old St. Michael's bells were tolled, but not by human
power.
When Charleston was in ruins spread, with desolation
sown;
That fearful night which in our lives stands out, apart,
alone.

But even this brings in a thought of lighter memory,
So 'neath the music of sweet bells come walk once more
with me;
And tell me to what better cause could I devote my
rhymes
Than to the soulful music of old St. Michael's chimes?

And the girls—the Charleston girls we knew, what boots
it to repeat,
They were the fairest ones we've met, and all surpassing
sweet.
Like summer light, through emerald boughs, their eyes
would melt to love;
Their hearts were like the sunny skies that wooed them
from above.

Good-bye, Ned! and God bless you! To St. Louis did you
say?

Oh, yes, I'm sure you'll meet them there, they're all along
the way;

For o'er this land from coast to coast, no matter where
you roam

You'll find an exiled Charleston boy, to talk of "Home,
sweet Home."

Norfolk, Va., August, 1898.

The above poem was published in the Charleston Evening Post with a kind comment, and brought many letters from old friends and acquaintances in Charleston and elsewhere.



TWO.

Two for a bargain or a debt,
And two to have a "tete a tete";
And odd though lovers often are
They never can be singular.

And two to hold each other's hands,
And two to kiss upon the sands;
And two events (observe the sense)
It takes to make a consequence.



“Join in to make the music
Of the soulful song of spring.”—*Page 66.*

SPRING'S LAMENTATION.

Yea, Spring has come! The light of golden days
Is mellow on bright fields and woodland ways;
And all the world is beauty newly born,
And every living thing hymns forth in praise.

The splendor of the garden comes again,
And springtime floods of sunshine and of rain
Have lured the rose its blushing leaves to spread,
While feathered songsters sing their soft refrain.

One year ago I roamed amid the flowers;
No thought of grief had I; the golden hours
Sped on, for she was by my side,
The soft-eyed girl I loved, 'neath emerald bowers.

This year alas—the flowers seem to say
“Why walkest thou alone this joyous way,
Have not we all returned, your friends of yore?
We wait Her welcome all the happy day.”

“Why comes she not?” the dainty tulip said,
“Where has she gone?” quoth robin overhead.
And from the fullness of my bleeding heart I cried
“Sweet friends, she whom you loved so well—is dead.”

"And will she not return?" the roses cried,
"Our lovely friend, who wandered by your side,
See! all things come to life again,
And this gulf Death is surely not so wide."

'Tis true, the spring with magic rare and free,
Revives all things "with heavenly alchemy;"
Touches the dead—they quicken and rejoice
But does not bring my loved one back to me.

And Spring's bright flowers in the sunlight wave,
They deck alike the garden—and the grave;
The old world's young again, with garlands crowned
But all is naught without the love I crave.

And so I cannot in the fire of spring
The desolation of my sad heart fling;
I would return just one short year ago,
Or soul to soul, with my dead love take wing.

After Rubaiyat.



I AND YOU.

“ 'Tis a strange world we came to,
You and I.”

* * * *

Whence and what this shape of clay?
Why the load I carry?
What the purpose of my life
And wherefore do I tarry?
Am I some strange and mystic thing
Of a haunted region?
Which Fate in fury once did fling
From some grotesque legion?
Condemned to know, not knowing why,
A seeking, suffering thing, called—I.

And what art thou? Strange circumstance
That finds thee here before me.
A creature of some wanton chance
That carelessly ignores thee.
A Unit in the Book of Fate,
Set for some later reckoning.
Canst thou not see—though blind thy state
Some phantom finger beckoning
From some fair shore of better view,
Where you—shall know the soul of You?

A GRIEVANCE.

This much we know—we came, we are;
And though perchance we pass to-morrow,
We feel some goal is set afar
Beyond a heaving sea of sorrow.
A tortured sea by tempests tossed,
By calms and strangest currents crossed,
Which ebb and flow with tides of thought
And strange confusion, madly wrought.
The sea upon which I and You
Are drifting, with no land in view.



A GRIEVANCE.

You're a petulant friend, and you don't serve me right
Said I to my muse, said I;
Your visits are short and your coldness does blight,
Said I to my muse, said I;
To come with such hurry by day or by night,
Then leave me disconsolate all of a fright,
One moment here, the next—out of sight
It's not at all friendly, said I.

When sometimes I bungle I think it's a shame,
Said I to my muse, said I;
To hint that in body and head I am "lame"
Said I to my muse, said I.
And while I consider some "incidents" closed,
I recall all the confidence in you reposed,
And feel that you should be more kindly disposed
Said I to my muse, said I.

If I venture to murmur you jump up and leave,
Said I to my muse, said I;
You call me a dunce and grant no reprieve,
Said I to my muse, said I.
To say that "I'm horribly, fearfully slow,"
Because I can't follow your wonderful flow,
And leave me with pen in my hand, full of woe
Is not reassuring, said I.

You're haughty and proud, and you lead me a dance,
Said I to my muse, said I.
I would do fairly well if you'd give me a chance,
Said I to my muse, said I.
Beware haughty lady! your temper I'll tame,
I'll draw on your love and you'll honor the claim;
We'll live with your mentor—the Goddess of Fame!
Sighed I to my muse, sighed I.

LOVE TRANSCENDENT.

June may come and go with flowers,
Summer time may pass away;
Autumn spread her deepening bowers,
Changing to a winter's day.
But Love is ever young and fair;
Days may come and go like flowers,
Golden tresses of her hair—
Sweet Love is ever young and fair.

Press of crowds and stress of trade,
"The madding throng's ignoble strife,"
Where roses droop their heads and fade
Lamenting their once purer life.
But Love is ever young and fair,
The world may age in vain endeavor;
Though silvered tresses tinge her hair—
Sweet Love is ever young and fair.

Summer lands 'neath summer skies,
Wild fresh winds and trackless seas;
The garden where sweet Omar lies;
Virgin woods and mountain breeze.
With these Love holds his courtly sway,
Winds may blow and seas may beat,
But Love knows every path and way—
And Love is ever young and fleet.

Phantom shapes that come and go,
Breaking hearts that burst in song;
Memories of the "Long Ago,"
But all save Love will fade anon.
For Love is ever young and fair,
Days may fade in gloom or glory;
Scented tresses of her hair!
Sweet Love is ever young and fair.



THE SWORD AND THE GUN.

Away with the pratings of peace 'mid a strife
That burdens the earth with falsehood and shame;
While hypocrites fatten, and ghouls barter life,
And harpy and trickster to virtue lay claim.
The bright flashing steel reflecting the sun,
The roar of the cannon, the bark of the gun
Shall chorus, 'til reign of the dastard is done.

The sword and the rifle were made for the men
Who lack the keen cunning their fellows to spoil;
Who hate the fool's mouthings, the hypocrite's pen,
And commerce which fattens on poverty's toil.
They are men of the mountains and men of the sea,
Steadfast of purpose, resolved to die free,
Oh, true steel! Oh, bright steel! they owe it to thee.

They chasten the spirit and atone for dark deeds,
They wash out in crimson the deepest of stain;
The blood of the lustful brings forth rankest weeds,
But blood of the hero is as Heaven's own rain
Which lures out bright flowers to cover his grave
Who died for his freedom and country to save.
Oh, the gun for the bold—the sword for the brave!

'Mid din of the battle, 'mid tramp of the host
Who heed the shrill bugle and answer with zeal;
The charge of grim heroes who reck not the cost
Doth all that is noble in mankind reveal.
So sing we thy praises, oh, gun, and oh, sword;
Thy virtues we cherish, thy meed we accord;
Be thou swift in the cause of the right and the Lord.

Dedicated to the late "Peace Conference" of the nations, a travesty in which the Russian Czar took the leading part.



THE MELODY OF SPRINGTIME.

The world's all love and beauty
With its harp attuned to praise,
And everything beneath the sun
Joys in his genial rays.
On the purple plains of morning
There's delight we can't define,
In the shimmer of the star light
Comes a thought that's all divine.

All nature is enchanted
And cries out Rejoice! Rejoice!
And a thousand feathered songsters
Blend in with happy voice,
While the rippling rills are running
Through their fringed and daisied way,
Adding melody to music
Which makes the whole world gay.

A wandering zephyr sighing
And reluctant to depart,
Makes love to all the flowers
And touches every heart.

While waving boughs, and insects
And birds upon the wing
Join in to make the music
Of the soulful song of spring.

And caressing breezes linger
To kiss the blushing rose,
While above a feathered singer
To his mate makes dainty pose.
And Cupid, wicked Cupid
Pursues his primrose way,
With his little bow and arrow
To seek whom he may slay.

Oh, this life is sweet in spring time
When the old world's young again,
And the heart beats rhythmic cadence
To the ravishing refrain.
'Tis the great Creator speaking
In a voice now soft, now strong,
That sets the soul to music
And the bursting heart to song.

"THOU BESIDE ME SINGING."

Where songsters in the woods their love notes blend;
Where distant sails upon the ocean bend;
'Tis there I would a thoughtful hour spend
With "thou beside me singing."

I care not friend the measure of thy purse,
I simply would thy kindly thoughts immerse
In this, and find thee in the cadence of my verse
"Beside me singing."

So come with me in paths where none intrude,
And we will break the world's great solitude;
And gaze on Nature free, and wild, and nude,
And hear her secret singing.

Her song alas—of me, takes scant concern,
And yields you—not the love for which you yearn.
More pleasing are her charms we sadly learn
With loved ones near us singing.

Nor does she in the woodland—on the wave,
Give lonely hearts the sympathy they crave;
Her song is merry o'er our best loved grave!
A discord to Love's singing.

Lies Omar there! poor ashes of her fire;
Within her realm he found no "heart's desire."
Queer shapes of clay with phantom souls! Such choir
Can rend' but soulless singing.

Yes, Nature is a cold dame in the end
If we alone on her for love depend;
The better we enjoy what she doth lend
With friends "beside us singing."

Stark form, set face, heaped o'er with kindred clay,
This is the tribute You and I must pay.
She gives, yes—but, alas! she takes away;
But there's a higher singing.

And now beneath the glorious Persian sky,
Lies he whose fretted clay has long been dry;
Yet while I pause 'mid Persian flowers to sigh,
Eternal Truth is singing.

And brother (or perhaps sweet sister) mine,
Within this book of verse there's many a line
Which pleads that we before His great white shrine
Be found—together singing.

TO A FIRST BORN CHILD.

From the land of "Heretofore,"
With not a blush of shame,
To our home this winter day
An unclad beggar came.
Strangest part of all to say—
This little beggar's come to stay,
And we could not say her nay;
For she is not to blame.

She is not learned in worldly ways,
Pure and undefiled.
Nothing cares for blame or praise,
Modest, sweet and mild.
Little soul from God above,
Little suppliant for our love,
Little angel may she prove;
Beauteous little child.

Latest pilgrim to the shore
Of life's restless sea,
For this I pray and heaven implore
That fair thy fate may be.
'And when at last thy race is run,
The little good thy father's done
'At duty's call from sun to sun;
May all redound to thee.

Your laugh is music to my heart
Joyous little Blanche!
Your sigh doth make the tear drops start,
Plaintive little Blanche.
“May He from Whom all blessings flow”
A blessing on my child bestow,
That she may naught but virtue know;
Her soul—forever “blanche.”

A prayer that was likewise a prophecy; Born February 9th, 1900; Died August 25th, 1900.



ROBERT BURNS—A TRIBUTE.

Though some may joy 'neath Persian skies
Where flowers are lush and rich in hue;
For me a softer garden lies
'Neath Scotland's sun, and Scottish dew.
And from a tide of empty dreams
I turn, to quaff of better streams.

'Tis not that I love that the less,
But 'tis that I love this the more;
The Persian flowers I caress,
But Caledonia's bloom adore.
And as I tread 'mid heath and ferns,
My gentle guide is Robert Burns.

The flowers whisper loves own tale,
Enchantment tips the fields o' rye;
The rose nods to the nightingale,
The zephyr breathes an amorous sigh;
And each delight the heart discerns
Is dowered with the grace of Burns.

I seem to hear his magic voice,
While memories of the past are rife;
Full well I know while I rejoice,
The lament of his lonely life;
The burden of the heart of him,
The sorrow of the soul of him.

Love's incense at his shrine I light,
I share the righteous wrath of him;
The garden swims before my sight,
I cheer the proud disdain of him,
And that swift lance of his keen wit,
Which slays the hollow hypocrite.

His dust's abloom! the woodlands ring
His melodies all but divine!
Oh, that from my poor clay might spring
Such wondrous grace as thine
Sweet "Bobbie" Burns; the world's delight,
Guard of Truth, and Beauty's Knight.

Wherever Scotchmen bide or stray,
Thy name must be their fondest token;
Thy verse a talisman always,
A magic charm fore'er unbroken.
Would that I could my poor wreath lay
On Caledonia's noblest clay.



AMERICA.

From out the vast expanse of eastern ocean
In regal splendor mounts the sun once more;
He beams upon this land in rapt devotion,
And hails with joy Columbia's happy shore.

A thousand cities woke beneath his beams,
The world enchanted smiled beneath his sway;
And plains and mountains, brooks and mighty streams
Renewed their homage to the God of Day.

His journey done, the crimson west adorning,
Bright sets the sun across Pacific main,
Reluctant leaves, but that he knows the morning
Will bring him o'er this happy land again.



“With thou beside me singing.”—*Page 67.*

MAY.

A gentle month is the month of May,
A little of heaven that seems to stray
O'er the wondering old world in its lonely way;
May, bright, beautiful May.

A heart-stirring month is the month of May,
When with little of work and plenty of play
The heart beats time to rhythmical lay
Of the music, sweet music of May.

A gentle girl is my own loved May,
Much more an angel than earthly clay;
Cheering my life on its lonely way,
May, my own sweet May.

When from stormy waters to some pleasant bay,
My soul shall be guided through life's weary way,
May my eyes see a vision, as in rapture I say:
"Angel, sweet angel May!"

Norfolk, May, 1898.

Prose is the cumbrous and often disordered rush of the heavy artillery. Poetry is the light infantry of language, marching in rhythmic cadence to its own silver voiced music.

REVERIE.

Once more with me, aside, apart,
Retracing pathways of the heart
In happier days. What joys, what tears,
What shadowy host of hopes and fears
Come trooping at the call?
From memory's silent hall.

We know again the trackless seas,
The virgin woods, the mountain breeze.
We feel the touch of baby hands,
We roam once more in foreign lands;
And like a glimpse of Heaven above
Comes memory of some maiden's love.

And sometimes fast, then softly, slow,
The stream of flitting fancies flow,
There's prizes that we could not win,
There's tears for all "that might have been"
And mingled with the world's sad sights
Comes memories of enchanted flights.

There's bits of lore from fairy land,
And saddened thoughts of hearts estranged.
A picture of some ocean shore
Brings back a face we'll see no more.

A phantom shape breaks on the view
Recalling some fond last adieu.

There's cadence sweet of woodland streams,
And echoes of dear childhood's dreams,
There's many a "Poet's golden word,"
And wondrous music we have heard.
And solitude of sylvan dells,
And melody of distant bells.

Ecstatic charm of starry nights
Full oft has lured from worldly sights
To glimpses of a better life,
And hate of all this foolish strife.
When all earth's splendor and renown
Seemed indeed a sorry crown.

There's mournful tales the wild winds bear,
Affliction's hand, and want and care.
And in the sunset's dying glow
We read ambition's "long ago."
But hope knows nothing of the past,
And hope and love will ever last.

“Fancies, fancies, nothing more,”
 From the mind’s full treasured store;
 Like phantoms come, like shadows go,
 So memory’s tide doth ebb and flow,
 From life’s early morning breaking
 To the sleep “that knows no waking.”



“WHILE ALL THE WORLD CRIED SHAME!”

Dedicated to one Charles E. Russell, with the admonition that the greatest instigator to great poetry, is Truth.

“While all the world cries shame, with her vast horde
 She drives this handful to their lone last stand, etc.”
 —Chas. E. Russell.

* * * *

An envious world cries shame, but in its heart
 It knows the lie deceitful lips give voice,
 And though wildly in acclaim of “freedom’s” part,
 Injustice plain to see is its cold choice.
 Aims a malicious tongue like poisoned dart
 At Her, whose laws enfranchise half mankind;
 Whose banner be it East or be it West
 Marks on the earth a refuge well defined
 For those, by this loud mouthing world oppressed.



"Latest pilgrim to the shore of life's restless sea."—*Page 69.*

The painted Jezebels cry shame, and seek
 To cast the stone; and in impotent rage
 Spit venom from the poisoned fangs that reek
 With hate of Her, who in just cause doth wage
 A righteous war 'gainst wrong. What though 'tis weak?
 This little Russ' may soon another Czar
 Bring forth to blight and curse that mighty land,
 Where Britain's flag has kept the door ajar
 For all. For this She stands with sword in hand.

While knaves and fools cry shame, disdainful She
 Pursues her way, nor heeds their praise nor blame.
 Her self set task stern sacrifice may be,
 But **such** have made fair Britain's glorious fame,
 Have made her flag the star of liberty.
 What though a myriad demons gibe and jeer,
 And seek to stem the tide of human weal;
 Her sons hear well the call—from far and near
 They come, and despots shall their power feel.

A rabble poet cries shame! This petty thing
 Pleads not that strong men faint, and children moan,
 And women sell their virtue, while greed doth wring
 The blood sweat from the toiler hears no groan!
 But makes the wolf and snake with ven'mous sting
 Cry shame to the lion! Ye gods, have we
 Become akin unto the ape and ass?
 For if a Poet can a liar be,
 E'en this and worse, forsooth, may come to pass.

RECOMPENSE.

Turn, wearied soul, from the world's troubled way,
Bright set the sun, though sombre the day;
A token of promise to those who will see,
Turn from thy sorrow, poor soul, and be free.

Turn, fainting spirit, from toil and from pain,
Bent with thy burden on life's narrow lane.
Blighted affection, hopes long deferred,
Dregs of despair in thy cup have been stirred.

Affliction thy portion proud spirit hath been;
Loneliness, weariness, sorrow, perhaps sin.
And fortune though courted remains but a name
Refusing to honor thy pitiful claim.

But look out from thy soul, let not earth seeing eyes
Bind thy brow to the ground—to folly that flies.
Raise eyes to the stars that eternally shine,
And know that their glory will also be thine.

From mansions of time—turn to mansions eternal,
From dead leaves of autumn to spring bright and vernal
From earth's narrow by-ways which bind thy poor sight
To realms where thy spirit released, shall delight.

From ways that are dark, turn to paths that are bright
With the splendors of God, and His holiest light.
From all which in mankind is brutal or vile
Turn thou to the haven no dross can defile.

There's a joy for each tear which in sorrow is shed;
And a promise is writ on the face of the dead.
Soon sorrow and sadness shall cease their soul sway!
Recompense thou shalt see—at the break of the day.



A SUMMER MEMORY.

“There's rosemary, that's for remembrance.”

We sat alone, my love and I
By the waves so deep and loud;
Beneath the solemn starry dome
Where waters glance 'mid dancing foam;
Far from the noisy crowd.

Far from the foolish haunts of men,
Far from the world's sad sights;
Far from the city's noise and din,
Far from its sorrow, want and sin,
And its glaring, garish lights.

And as she gazed up in my eyes,
Her soft hand on me leaning;
She seemed an angel in disguise,
Sent from Heaven—pure and wise,
To show me life's true meaning.

What are the billows saying, love,
Why do the sad waves moan?
Why do the troubled waters sigh
As to the shore they venture nigh?
As if they would atone.

Atone for deeds done in their rage,
For their maddened fury crave
A forgiving kiss from the shore face brown,
Pardon for dead men thrown down
In wrath, by some angry wave?

No, no! Of love alone to-night
They talk; each wave a wooer is;
The wild winds kiss each laughing face,
The brown beach is their trysting place;
They mingle their lives in a wild embrace,
The stars their silent witness.

And love will long remember
That night upon the sands;
When 'neath the gleam of the moon's pale beam,
Oh, peaceful, sweet and happy dream—
We sat with clasped hands.

The rough wind kissed her beauteous brow
And played with her silken hair,
A crown of glory, and my vow
Was then as surely it is now—
Meet finish to a fabric rare.

And as I looked into that heart
Upon that face so fair;
'Twas bliss indeed, for I did read
A promise great, a living creed
And life's solemn meaning there.

Sullivan's Island, 1889.



THE MAN WITH THE GREAT CONTROL.

Bowed by the weight of power and wealth, he leans
Within the shadow of his sunless den.
A giant in the world's control,
A dwarf in heart, a very mite in soul.
Who made him dead to rapture, love and beauty?
A Thing that hopes but for the vain increase
Of dross, which he anon must leave.
A Cerberus whose cursed greed is never satisfied.
Whose was the hand that seamed this hard set face,
Who set the eye that views unmoved the bleeding heart,
Who cast the harsh metallic voice that knows no tone of
pity?
What is this Shape which undismayed can hear
The heaving sigh of the world's great agony?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over nobler men?
To wield the destiny of human souls,
To wear the crown of immortality
Who seeks alone the tinsel crown of Mammon?
If this be so, sweet Christ have mercy on thy fold!
This shape that stuns the heart and makes the soul despair
Is brother to the hungry wolf, the venomous snake,
And every beast of prey that feeds on lust and ravage.

This Incarnation of material things, this earth-bound Man
Stands forth the crowning curse, the withering blight
Of all creation.

Men, do ye know him? The birds are mute, the roses droop
Their heads at his approach. Brother to the ox indeed!
Why This—within the realm of brutes, is greatest Brute
Of all; tear but the mask and see—he stands revealed
In all the fury of his naked lust—a hideous Monster.
A Vision fit to blast the eyes, to dull sweet faith,
To rack the heart of humankind. And to this Thing
Oh men, do ye give power, to turn the course
Of nature's bounty all awry. This Man who in the name
Of "business," crimes commit whose fearful wrong, cries
Up to God's white throne for retribution.

Oh where shall Virtue find a living place,
With Plenty's horn held fast in hands like this?
What need for Her with streaming, pleading face
To seek bright Hope, or ask for Mercy's kiss?
This tribe would crush her off the earth
And strangle her fair offspring at their birth.
This Thing that mocks the Savior's sacrifice
Hates all but that which pampers Pride and Vice.
This Vampire on the world's supreme distress
Cares naught for blame, for blessing cares he less.

Abundant in the blessings of a bounteous God
A fairer world was ne'er set in the lap of space;
And seasons spread beneath a pleasant sun
Bring forth unnumbered joys of bounding life.
Hill and dale, and ocean's vast expanse
Produce alike a myriad fairy forms,
While set round all a countless throng of
World's majestic, invite profoundest awe.
But this gross Thing makes all his immolation,
And sears the earth with fret and desolation.





“Shed on him beauteous moon,
Love's golden fire.”—*Page 106.*

CONTEMPLATION.

Like bird that beats against restraining bars
The soul imprisoned in this suffering clay,
Poor thing of circumstance and fickle chance,
Cries out at its probation;
And while yet a slave
"To hard Mortality the soul's jailer,"
It dreams of all things free.
And though bowed beneath a load of vexing sorrow,
Pent in this narrow, empty way of life,
The higher soul doth make a world
Quite all its own;
A world of joy, and peace, and light;
Wherein, though yet a weary exile, it may roam
Those confines bright, and vast, and beautiful.
Within this realm resplendent,
They that suffer find a surcease sweet,
And they that weary, find a rest,
And new pure joy of being.

And what though I be poor, as poverty reckoned
In this world of ours? My mind is rich

In things of greater need!
The stars of Heaven shine as much for me
As for the sceptered King.
The peaceful content of an honest heart
Is mine, and from the turmoil
Of the maddening world,
I turn to things sublime and find
A glorious promise.
The ineffable ecstasy and peace of being

Which dwells with those who contemplate
In love and reverence
The solemn splendors of a starry night,
Are mine, whene'er I choose to tread
Their crystal depths;
And in the realms of fancy, far and free,
My soul delights, and findeth there indeed
A blessed promise of that peace
"Which passeth understanding."

And thus for those who scorn, yet bear
The petty things of this brief span,
There is a fount filled to the brim

With purest joy sublime,
Unmixed with taint of baser uses;
And to that living stream the wearied soul
May turn, and cleanse the parching dust and heat
Of this world's fret and care.
Nature's portals stand ajar inviting
All who at her truthful shrine would kneel.
Behind her mighty laws we know and feel
The touch of an Almighty hand
Whose Presence is but veiled by such thin curtain
That the raptured soul can almost touch
And draw aside.

And Death! the grim and awful terror
Of those abandoned to the ways of earth,
Comes to the soul uplifted a genial host,
Bidding it welcome to its heritage—
A boundless prospect, in which a thousand worlds
Shall be but as a city to the earth,
And a thousand years—a day.
Armed well to strike, and keeping by command
That region pure, the Heavenly guards are set;
The pass word there is "purity,"
The countersign, an honest heart.

What matter brother if thy burden here be heavy,
And thy sad heart turn sick along the way,
And none take heed? Tune but thy soul
To things sublime, and in thy desolation know,
For every night there is a day,
And for each tear in sadness shed
A great, vast sea of sympathy.



SOMETIMES THINK OF ME.

When in thy wanderings
O'er deep seas afar,
Lonely thy heart may be
Think then of me.

Night on the battle field
Bright stars their vigil keep,
Think what the day may see,
Turn then to me.

And when the wild winds roar
Night on a rock bound shore,
God thy protector be,
Think then of me.

When in sad retrospect
Heart ache and dumb regret,
Life not what life might be,
Think then of me.

Long is the lonely night,
Sad is the morn so bright,
Dim my poor aching sight;
Haste love, to me.

I am thy guiding star,
Come back from lands afar,
Look in thy heart and see
Image of me.



SIR THOMAS LIPTON, SALUTAMUS!

Like Knight of old with "snow white crest"
On prancing steed and lance in rest,
He sought with knightly, courtly ways
The tourney field of modern days.
His was the joy that warriors know
When first they meet a worthy foe.

His steed—a ship that did not lag,
His banner—grand old England's flag;
His lance—a towering mast in stays,
His "Ladye love"—a silver vase.
And thus he came o'er sea's expanse
To "lift" that "chalice of romance."

The "Ocean Lists" which held this most
Prized gem, lay off Columbia's coast;
A "tilt yard of the sea" ablaze
With glorious deeds of other days.
The vase he found in worthy keeping,
And round its shrine no knight was sleeping.

Columbia! Shamrock! Ave et Vale!
White sisters of the towering sail;
That won and lost the knightly fray
And trophy of great nation's play.
The Trophy which for e'er must be
Blue Ribbon of the bounding sea.

But though brave Shamrock lost the race,
There is no doubt about the place
Sir Thomas holds in Yankee hearts.
The cheer a "Loving Cup" imparts
Is his, filled to the very brim
With greetings, health and joy to him.

L'envoi. . . .

So when in retrospection's aisle
In after years we rest awhile,
We'll see these two (through mem'ry's mists)
Light lances of the "Ocean Lists."
We'll hail the gem of memory's store
Their tilt off fair Columbia's shore.
In friendship's sunset sea we'll dip
Our flag, to Knight and Emerald Ship.

In recognition of his qualities as a gentleman and sportsman the citizens of the United States contributed a fund for the purpose of presenting Sir Thomas Lipton a testimonial of their regard. A magnificent golden "Loving Cup" suitably engraved was sent to him. The incident inspired the above lines, which the committee in charge deemed a "very fit accompaniment" for the Cup.



ISLE OF THE HEART'S DESIRE.

Beautiful Isle
Of a beautiful sea,
Oft my soul wanders
Enraptured to thee.

Azure of sky
Golden of beach,
Beautiful Island
So far from my reach.

Silvered waves glancing
'Neath moonlight entrancing,
Thy charms enhancing,
Isle of the sea.

Beautiful Isle,
Verdant thy strand,
Wooed by the waters
That beat on thy sand.

Island enchanted!
Beauteous gem,
Queen of the jewels
In earth's diadem.

L. of C.

ISLE OF THE HEART'S DESIRE.

Dew fed, sun showered,
Perfumed, embowered,
Melody dowered
Isle of the sea!

Kissed by the south breeze,
Woody by the waves;
Radiant with sunshine,
My soul for thee craves.

Some day I will reach thee,
And wander no more,
Beautiful Isle
Of the beckoning shore.

Chanting thy praises
I never could tire,
Beautiful Isle
Of the sad "Heart's Desire."



SHAKESPEARE.

There lived a man of such surpassing pen
That e'en to praise lends grace to lesser men;
Wherefore my homage prompts, my pen designs
The passing tribute of these simple lines.

Not that the measure of my obscure praise
Could honor him who set the world ablaze;
I claim but vassal poet's meed, to bring
A reverent homage to his Poet King.

* * * *

Surpassing Shakespeare! Splendid man of yore,
Whose memory all the best of earth adore;
Thou livest still by virtue all thine own,
Thou canst not die while reason holds her throne.

The lustre of thy sun pales all beside,
The current of thy thoughts is as a tide
Which knows no ebb, but ever full and strong
Flows on forever, taking all along.

"Exceeded by the height of happier men"?
Ah, no indeed, the old world wonders when
That soul seraphic shall assume man's shape,
And e'en the meanest of thy verses drape.

The faintest whisper of thy mighty voice,
Hath charm to make the thoughtful soul rejoice.
Like some swift craft that does the fleet forsake,
Thou leavest all to follow in thy wake.

Thine undiminished splendor dazzles still,
Nor will thy genius cease to bind and thrill
Thy worshippers; for thy eternal fame
Securely set, burns with undying flame.

Thou gentlest spirit of our mortal race,
Who charmed the earth with rare and wondrous grace.
Impotent pen! that would presume to tell
Of shining symbols thou hast wrought so well.

Thou art the rarest heritage of time,
A relic of the world's full, happy prime;
The like of which we'll see no more on earth;
Thou left a goddess barren at thy birth.

Mightiest master of the realms of thought,
The wisest of the earth have never sought
Within thy pages for a text in vain;
And so they'll come, and seek, and find again.

Immortal Bard! Eternally in debt
Are we to thy great treasure house; and yet
We would not cast aside thy gentle yoke,
Nor from enchantment of thy spell be woke.

No depth of thought thy great soul could not sound;
In Himalayan heights thy fancy found
Congenial soil; nor great, nor small ignored,
Left naught uncompassed, and naught unexplored.

Before the magic of thy wondrous flame
A thousand poet's work lies cold and tame.
Thine own words serve the best for thy adornment
So thou art still "the world's fresh ornament."

Immeasurable mastery was thine,
Thou mad'st a profane tongue all but divine.
Invincible! Endowed with heavenly grace,
The splendor of thy light naught can efface.

Like sun converting from the marshy plain
Polluted waters into heavenly rain,
So thy enchanted wand did'st alchemize
The leaden clod, on golden wings to rise.

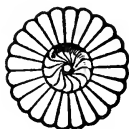
Supreme! Transcendant! King of earthly kings,
How came thee in this world of common things?
Relenting Fate one day in kindly bent
Saw Beauty prostrate and sweet Shakespeare sent.

* * * *

Oh, England! When is passed thy worldwide sway,
When armaments and commerce fade away;
When conquering names seem but a restless dream,
His name alone, shall make thine own supreme.

And though the world heeds not this verse of mine,
I lay it with my love at his great shrine.
To stand uncovered by his mighty grave
Is but the fonder privilege I crave.

A tribute from America.



PLEASURE AND CONTENT.

To seek this twain a youth one day
Set out upon his laughing way,
And nothing could his ardor stay
So sure was he the finding.

Anon—an old man aged and bent
With furrowed face and strength all spent
Still sought in vain that wight "Content,"
And still is seeking.

To all else blind yon silk set dame
Called madly on false "Pleasure's" name,
And fanned slow fires to glowing flame
To burn before his altar.

Too soon alas! the fire was cold,
Too soon, alas! the young grow old;
Too soon alas! the tale is told
That fires and men make ashes.

Though wide the world and great its treasure,
Too poor it is, too mean its measure
To bribe and hold Content and Pleasure,
They're phantoms never bridled.

MOONLIGHT MADRIGAL.

Tell me bright Queen of Heaven,
Thou shalt my prophet be;
When to me shall be given
She whom I long to see?
Thou art the lover's charm,
Hear thou my litany;
Shed down some hopeful balm,
Unveil my fate to me.

Chorus (echo).

Queen of the ebb and flow
Of the great tides below,
To his cloyed vision show
His heart's desire.
Shed on him beauteous moon
Love's golden fire.

Queen of the lover's night
Hear thou my lone lament,
Bring to my aching sight,
Earth born though heaven sent
Girl, of the pensive mien,
She of the drooping eyes;
Thou of the night art Queen,
Grant me this glad surprise.

A POET'S PLAINT.

A poet lived as a poet will
On a diet of fancy and song;
With a heart attune to the glow of June,
And light with the thought that ere long
The world would listen and perhaps give heed,
Would nourish a flower instead of a weed;
For the poet had cherished a beautiful creed,
And his faith was pure and strong.

And he toiled along in his lonely way
As only a poet can,
And he turned his face to a brighter day,
With faith in his fellow man.
He wrote of love and he wrote of beauty,
He wrote of right, and faith, and duty,
He wrote of a smiling land of plenty;
With nothing, his flame to fan.

But the poet had fallen on evil days,
As many have done before;
His lot was cast 'mid barren ways,
And his heart grew heavy and sore;
For he reckoned not with the fool's disdain
And the envy that comes like a blighting bane,
So the poet's work was all in vain,
And they laughed at the rags he wore.

And envy sneered and his friends were few,
And wealth gave its wild acclaim,
To the pampered clown and the parvenu,
A story that's often the same.
And the poet starved as the poet must
Who sows the wheat and reaps but dust
So his cheeks grew pale and his pen did rust;
Forsooth! who was to blame?

For the world demands in its narrow creed
That those who would gain its smile,
Should follow assenting its brutish lead,
And its sin and its lust beguile.
But the poet's path lies another way,
It leads from darkness unto the day
Where the greater Poet holds His sway,
Where nothing can defile.



AT EVENTIDE.

"Now was the day departing."

'Tis sunset and the shadows fling
The spell of silence o'er us,
And vesper bells now softly ring,
And night is all before us.

And twilight's sway is o'er the earth
In hushed and mellow splendor,
The children from their romp and mirth
Seek home and loved ones tender.

And gathering shades of dark prevail
To dim day's golden glory,
The lark yields to the nightingale
Love's everlasting story.

Bright hour whose birth is in the West,
Thou of the Sun's farewell;
Last jewel of the daytime's crest,
Thy charm no tongue may tell.

Child of the Day King's afterthought,
Born of the Night Queen's grace;
Well o'er the world thy magic's wrought,
Fair is thy beauteous face.

Soft soulful hour of eventide!
The earth now consecrating,
When strife and stress cannot abide,
For love and peace are mating.

God's Acre too, lies 'neath thy dew,
The dead their soul thirst slaking,
And in their dreams the past review,
And wait the wondrous waking.

Sweet twilight hour! when sad ones know
The heart's humility;
When Heaven's shining symbols show
The soul's sublimity.





“The call! the onset! the flash of busy steel!”—*Page 113.*

A BATTLE PICTURE OF THE AFRICAN VELDT.

The battle light on grim and steadfast faces;
The martial order set to purpose dire;
In muster ranged o'er broken barren places
They wait beneath the fire.

The call! The onset! The flash of busy steel!
The dreadful cries of maddened man to man;
The fearful joy the reddened victor's feel;
The same blood story since the world began.

And there in solemn stateliness advancing,
The glittering masses of the squadrons break
Upon the scene; the steeds to music prancing
Indeed a glorious picture make.

And now they charge! The cruel lance and sabre
Strews thick the earth with quivering human clay;
And yet 'tis writ that we should love our neighbor!
And still we dare to pray.

Yet hast ordained, Oh, God! that in the cause of right
Thy people should wage war, and slay, and kill!
And here again they stand who wage the fight
In Freedom's holy name. They do Thy will.

For this the battle's glory, pride and splendor;
For this the cries of pain racked, dying men.
For this the life blood which the valiant render;
For this the tribute of my trembling pen.

What though some lips must drain the bitter chalice?
'Tis better that, than wrong sustained by might.
And Britain's sons in pluck and not in malice
Will set the wrong aright.

The battle's o'er. In eyes of brave men lurk
Tears for the havoc which the hour has wrought.
And with the contemplation of their handiwork
There comes—Oh, God!—the afterthought—

That there—beyond the rage and stress of battle,
Beyond the confines of the blood stained land;
The mothers, wives and sisters of these lost ones
Like pitying angels stand.



A MINOR CHORD.

Like timid feet on some forbidden pathway,
I tread the road well worn by happier men;
And in the fervor of my star struck fancy,
I search the secret of their wondrous ken.

Sweet Muse, long have I borne thy burden,
Upon this all too yielding heart of mine;
Yet faithful unto death thy ardent lover,
Therefore my path, the way thou would'st incline.

Dim in the distance yet within discernment,
Appears the herald by the seers foretold;
As eventide but brings those rarer glories,
Such as the sunset solitudes unfold.

Prevailing o'er my spirit comes the grieving,
For the sinful and the sodden ways we choose;
For blight that's born and bred of vain achieving,
For all the God like glory which we lose.

In vain we seek for light where all is darkness,
In vain we seek to reap where naught was sown;
In vain we look for lilies in some pasture
Where tangled weeds and nettles long have grown.

Deafened by the din of worldly discord,
We miss the angel knocking at our door.
Blinded by the glare of worldly glamor,
We miss the beacons on the heavenly shore.

Reluctantly the setting sun is fading,
But e'er his passing grieves our ling'ring sight,
New inspiration fires the silent watcher
Beneath the softer splendors of the night.

Divining all the signs premonitory,
Some seers tread the way that leads to God;
Upon some aged face of heaven lit glory,
We read the path the gentle soul has trod

No human eye may gauge the sun at noontide,
No man may calm the full and cresting wave;
No man may stem the progress of the spirit,
And none deny the signs beyond the grave.

Intent upon some pursuit of the petty,
Along the stream of life we slowly glide;
We hug the river's margin slow and muddy,
And miss the moment of its mighty tide.

For me, some time dear Lord, to voice the music,
That seeks expression through this shape of clay;
Some little time, dear Lord, thy lamp a burning,
To light some pilgrim on the better way.



TO MY SISTER.

Fret not, dear heart, full oft' the face
That wears the glow of pleasure,
Hides soul that's barred without the grace
Of virtue's beauteous measure.
So envy not the laughing face,—
The robes of yonder dame,
For better rags with virtue's grace
Than satin, silks,—and shame.

Not that I would presume to scan
My erring sister's ways;
But virtue by the fiat of man
Doth earn but scanty praise.
The hands of vice hold plenty's horn
Filled up in heaping measure,
While virtue toils in rags forlorn,
Her purity her treasure.

And pity may be kin to love,
But love and lust are adverse;
While judgment is to Him above,
With sin we need no converse.
When righteousness is weak and faint
And vice doth all things win,
I'd sing of her without the taint
Of satin, silk—and sin.

'Tis not I pity shame the less,
But love chaste virtue more,
For virtue oft' needs simple dress
While shame has gold in store.
And she who toils from night to morn
With only rags to dress her,
May never gold or silk adorn
Unless her God can bless her.



WATCHMAN,—WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

Watchman, the night is dark and drear,
And the wail of the wind is mournful to hear,
And darkening clouds are gathering near;
Watchman,—what of the night?

And the beacon light in the mist grows dim,
And the face of the waters is dark and grim,
And the ship is in peril, though staunch and trim;
Watchman,—what of the night?

Will the light not fail in the perilous hour?
Is the lamp well set in the lofty tower?
Will no one shirk,—will no one cower?
 Watchman,—what of the night?

Will the signal-man flash the warning sign
That rouses the watchers adown the line?
To follow the Captain will none decline?
 Watchman,—what of the night?

Are the Service men ready with line and oar?
Is the life-boat pointed towards the shore?
Is the Captain alert by the open door?
 Watchman,—what of the night?

Will the good ship weather the tempest's blast?
Will she pass the Cape to the haven at last?
Will all report Here! when the storm is past?
 Watchman,—what of the night?

Will the morrow tell of a fight well fought
When the morning sees what the night has wrought?
Was his post of duty by each man sought?
 Watchman,—what of the night?

Cape Henry, Va., Sept. 12, 1900.

IN FANCY'S REALM.

Adown the aisles of retrospect,
And paths where hope's prized seeds are sown;
There lies a world where none intrude,
A wondrous world of solitude
Called "Fancy's Realm," 'tis all our own.

Two angels rule this radiant realm,
Pale "Memory" and rosy "Hope,"
The one guards treasures of the past,
The other's watch is wide and vast,
With all creation for her scope.

The press of crowds and stress of trade,
"The madding throng's ignoble strife";
Herein give place to soul's surcease
And wondrous calm of perfect peace,
And glimpses of a better life.
And Sorrow, Joy and Love and Fear,
White pilgrims, find their haven here.

Phantom shapes move to and fro
And seem to find a solace there;
Strange sad thoughts at sunset's glow
Their mournful message bear.
And many a kindly spoken word;
And wondrous music we have heard,
Breaks o'er the fields of fancy.

Sometimes Remorse, a restless ghost,
With sad Regret stalks hand in hand;
And all the heart ache and the fret
That fringe pale memory's silhouette
Comes forth to meet them on the strand.

Anon—to love and joy and light,
This fairy world is all akin!
Fades fast before the wondrous sight
All tears, for that which "might have been."
'Tis then with hearts that cannot fail
We mount, and draw aside the veil,
And find the truth—There is no sin.

In Fancy's realm the soul is free
To probe the world's great mystery.
The mind's discourse of "This and That"
The piteous plaint of "Rubaiyat,"
Finds answer in this sweet and lone
Enchanted world, that's all our own.

HE THAT ASPIRETH.

“But yours the cold heart, and the murderous tongue.”

'Tis ever the same old story,
Told 'mid our tears and pain,
Of the toil that knew no recompense
And the hazard that knew no gain.
Of the well meant plans of our hearts and hands,
Of the flame unfalt'ringly fanned,
To the work well wrought,
And the ones we sought,
Who did not understand.

'Tis ever the bitter story
Which the gentle have learned full well,
Of the reign of vice, and a paradise
By its tenants turned to a hell.
Of the venture cast, and the promise past,
And the soul that was left forlorn;
And the sneering scan of the “business” man,
And the blight of the proud one's scorn.

'Tis ever the same old story,
Set to our soul's refrain,
Of the envious fool, and the thieving ghoul,
And the pompous clown's disdain.
And the cold surprise of the piercing eyes,
Of the "leading" man of the town,
A cad, who thought wise from his gilt disguise,
When he did not know—to frown.

'Tis ever the same old story
Told 'mid our tears and pain,
Of the toil that knew no recompense
And the hazard that knew no gain.
Of the one who would, and thought he could
Some smouldering love warmth fan,
To the vulgar brood who deemed they should
Decry so "vain" a plan.

'Tis ever the same sad story
With melancholy fraught,
Of they who would teach
The good within reach,
And the world that would not be taught.
Of the wonderful web by fancy wove,
With its soft, soul set design,
To the finding our love with its treasure trove,
But the pearls that were "cast to swine."

Note:—For the first verse of the above some acknowledgment is due Mr. Kipling.

FETTER NOT THY SOUL.

There appeared in the columns of the N. Y. Journal a letter from an underpaid toiler of eighty-one years of age, whose weary old frame cried out for just sufficient to give rest to his few remaining days. Finding five thousand dollars belonging to his Croesusian employers and returning the same, for which he received no recompense, and being discharged shortly after for incapacity, he wrote to ask would he not have been justified in keeping the amount. The singular beauty and sentiment contained in the reply of that paper inspired the following lines.

Tired and worn, bent and grey,
Sighing for peace and rest;
An old man stopped in his toil one day
To ask if it were best
To toil, and be just, in the pitiless drive
Which man for his brother doth contrive;
Or cast off his honor and profit derive
From crime, with its promise of rest?

The Reply. . . .

The rest which thou seekest, old man, is near won,
'Tis born of the peace of the just;
So chain not thy spirit ere it is begun
By cravings for gold and its lust.
Bind not thy soul to the hither-side dark,
Thou art near to the shore where the Ferryman's bark
Takes passengers only, while back in the dark
Their baggage is left, in the dust.

Pure of heart and free from stain!
Thou hast lived for four score years?
How canst thou say thy life's been vain
Though filled with pain and tears?
The bursting sobs of souls oppressed,
The cry of the weary for rest, sweet rest,
Are answered brother—when God thinks best,
Be sure, old man, He hears.

Steadfast thy face to the hereafter keep,
Reach back not for crime and for dross;
When the Dark Angel beckons thy dim eye will sweep
O'er those who make way to the fosse.
By the side of thy bundle so meagre and small,
The murderer's bludgeon, the thief's cursed spoil,
Fair Vanity's jewels, Sir Millionaire's all,
Must be laid, ere the waters they cross.

And Man with thy millions, but withered of soul,
With Gold! for thy watchword, and Business! thy cry;
Who turns Nature's bounty to pitiless dole
With keen cunning; and heeds not pale Poverty's sigh.
Unfetter thy spirit! Raise up earth-bound eyes
See! Justice the plan of the world underlies;
Recompense! Retribution! Is writ in the skies,
Oh Man with thy millions! Make haste to be wise.



NIGHT'S ENCHANTMENT.

The daisies and the daffodils,
A mob of moon-eyed madcaps,
That line the downs, and fringe the hills,
And deck the marge the stream laps,

Are nodding in this gloaming hour,
And whispering the token
That night has come, and bird and flower
Must keep the spell unbroken.

And now the night puts swift to flight
Day's remnant that would falter,
And calls upon all worldly sight
To bow before her altar.

Some hand unseen now draws the screen
That hides the hosts of Heaven
And lo! a myriad silver lights
To rapture's gaze are given.

Soft Luna in her youthful prime
Now crowns the earth with glory,
Sets all the prose of day to rhyme,
And well she tells the story.

The Moon Sprite roves the earth where ways
Are silvery and golden,
And with the Nymphs of night she plays
As in the times of olden.

And they who once have seen her face
Strange benisons are granted,
Are "poets" called, a "moon-struck" race
Who live in lands enchanted.

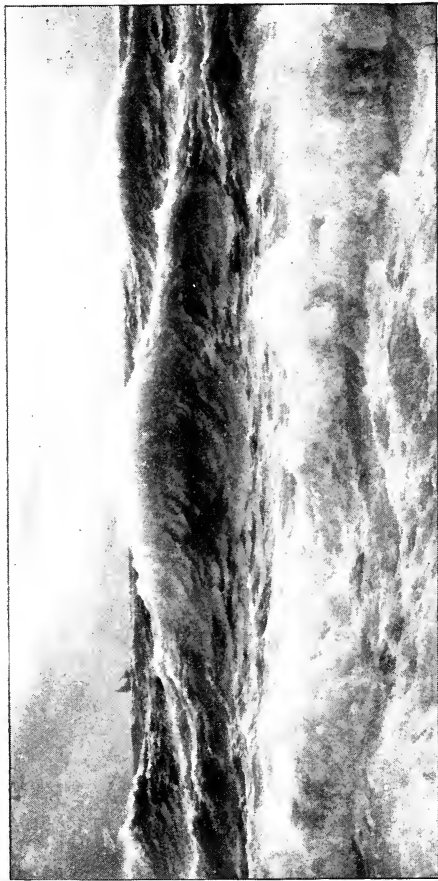


THE CONQUERING HERO COMES!

From the golden Orient
A stately ship makes way,
Her snow white sides are gleaming
As she parts the salty spray;
And her crew with joy are beaming
As they near Manhattan bay.

And this vessel—hero laden
From the eastern land,
Nears at last a welcome haven
With Dewey in command.
And the land is proud to meet him,
Proud to clasp his hand and greet him,
Proud to weave his wreath, and seat him
High on Glory's stand.

And the trim Olympia speeding
Straight as Cupid's dart,
Little recks that love is leading
To our bursting heart.
Gallant Dewey! how we love him,
And there's none we place above him,
Eagerly we wait to prove him
Chief! of every heart.



“ And the face of the waters is dark and grim.”—*Page 118.*

Victorious! Towards the West
Comes the Conqueror avowed;
To the fane of Fame addressed,
And his countrymen are proud;
Proud to know the land which bore him,
Places no one else before him,
Proud there's none that can ignore him,
When the haughtiest he bowed.

Dewey's name will shine resplendent
In the after years,
Song and poetry be attendant.
Now—our love and cheers
For him who fought his country's fight,
And fought for justice and for right,
And fought against dishonor's blight
Cast 'mid grief and tears.

L'envoi. . . .

So may our flag ne'er lack defender
While the world will last;
May heroes haste their lives to tender
At the foreign blast.
When Freedom's fiat foes ignore,
God grant that from Columbia's shore
Another Dewey—bold in war,
Shall spring before his mast.

August 18, 1899.

THE TEMPLE OF MAMMON.

To a "leading" bank.

The Temple of Mammon is set on the highway,
Its steps are of marble, its aspect is bold;
And wide though its entrance, and easy of access,
A sinister challenge its portals enfold,
For this is the Temple, the awe 'spiring Temple,
The wonderful Temple of Gold.

And Envy and Pride, and Lust and Greed
Are visitors welcome here,
And they swear by a mystic golden creed
As they quaff of the golden cheer;
The heartless creed, the soul stunting creed,
The creed that knows never a tear.

And here is the acme of hopes that join
And wed us, to tears and moans;
And I hear 'mid the cadence of clinking coin,
The rattle of dead men's bones;
The horrible rattle! The soul shaking rattle!
The rattle of dead men's bones!

Pale is the face and set are the lips
Of the man who bends over the page;
And deft are the fingers, and keen is the eye
Of the one in the brass bound cage;
The gold-girt man; the brass-bound man;
The intensely keen man, of the cage.

And the president sits, like the vulture, that flits
O'er the field when the battle is won;
And he "gathers the gear" of his golden cheer,
When the stress of the work day is done;
The "settlement" day, the "mortgage due" day;
The day that the Banking House won.

Oh, the Temple of Mammon was reared by the men
Who cherish the "golden creed";
Of the "rule" they care naught, and the world they have
taught,
To follow their "financial" lead;
So great is the Temple! And rich is the Temple!
The soul slaying Temple of Greed!

To have and to hold is the story that's told,
By the lights burning bright in the day;
So they skim of the shift—of the golden drift,
As they follow its glittering way.
And this is the story, the very old story,
The story of metal and clay.

NOT FORGOTTEN.

“O friends! forget not, as you laugh and play,
Some that were laughing with you yesterday.”

—Rubaiyat.

Say not that we forget them,
The dear familiar faces;
Their thousand acts of kindness
And their sweet and loving ways.
A sister's earnest sympathy,
A mother's fond embraces,
And the sunny smiles of welcome
Which we knew in happier days.

They're gone but not forgotten
Are our friends of yesterday;
We remember them in sorrow,
Full often in our play.
And the heart must cease its throbbing,
And the mind must leave its throne,
Ere it cease to make its pilgrimage
To their resting place so lone,



“Like timid feet on some forbidden pathway.”—*Page 115.*

'Mid the busy hives of human life,
The marts of trade,—the street,
Places that once knew them,
'Tis there we often meet.
And sometimes a simple saying
Comes when we least expect,
To send our thoughts a straying
Down the aisles of retrospect.

I remember an inscription
That is 'graved upon a stone:
"Stranger pause and ponder
As you pass this way so lone;
For once I was as you are now,
As I am,—you will be.
So, stranger, well prepare thyself
For death,—and follow me.

Oh, ye blessed lost and loved ones
Who will nevermore return,
For your gentle hearts and faces
Our hearts do often yearn.
And we turn the yielding pages
Of the love we have in store,
And feel resigned when there we find
"Not dead, but gone before."

The inscription above referred to appears in an old English church yard and reads:

“Stranger, stop, as you pass by;
As you are now so once was I,
As I am now so you will be.
Prepare for death—and follow me.”

Some irreverent wag added beneath:

“To follow you I'm not content
Until I know which way you went.”



END OF THE CENTURY ECLIPSE.

From out the grey expanse of eastern ocean
In regal splendor mounts the sun once more.
The willing world renews her ancient homage,
All nature springs to meet him and adore.
A thousand cities wake beneath his beams,
The world enchanted smiles beneath his sway;
And plains and mountains, brooks and mighty streams
Renew their fealty to the god of day.

But lately risen in such full and glorious majesty,
What shape is that intrudes athwart his path?
What tarnish mars the glory of his visage
And dims the splendor of his sovereign smile?
Spreading a gathering pall as of the night
That with rapacious clasp entralls
The land, the sea, the air, the light.

And even as inquiring eyes are raised
The shadow deepens and the darkness comes.
Before the onrush of dissembling night
The day is fast departing.
Or can it be that from a world of shame
The servant of Omnipotence doth hide his face?
The silent combat rages—the foe prevails,
And now his conquest is complete!
To bind the frightful victory
See where the darkened cavalry advance
From out the west! Silent as doom,
Swift as the pinions of imagination,
The mighty shadow rushes down
Upon a trembling world.

The sovereign lord of life and light constrained,
Now leaves his offspring to a sunless fate,
And lo! a world transformed!
A world of darkness and of chill,
A trembling pit of funereal gloom.
The ribald jest is hushed,
The foolish tongue is stilled.
The vicious and the sinful stand abashed
Before this lesser frown of God.
Eyes which long had sought
Down in the dust, a coin, look up
And marvel with a quaking heart.
The multitudes are mute
As with uplifted face they read the sign
That God is Lord of all.

And when this shadow of a false night fell,
A vision in that startled minute crushed
Of that dread day to come
When God shall search the souls of men.
Sordid minds and stunted hearts
From out the by-ways of a narrow life
For once look up, and even as they look
The frown is lifted. Like token of forgiveness
Breaks out the splendor of his smile once more;
A sign to some who read, that darkened deeds
Can hold but short and transient sway;
And emblem of the prospect
Which the virtuous soul shall see
When death himself withdraws the veil.

Norfolk, Va., May 28, 1900.



SEASIDE REPORTEE.

And the Land looked down on the ocean
And said "It is plain to me
That you're simply a wide depression
Of myself, and they call you the Sea.
So in vain is your bluster and blowing
And your pounding upon my strand,
For no matter how deep
Your tides may sweep
They rest at last upon land.

And the Sea smiled up at his brother
With the smile of the one who knows best,
And he said "Though I'm a depression,
Such jokes make me most depressed.
And 'tis only a slight elevation
Keeps part of you out of my flood,
Were it not for that
I think it is pat
That your name at its best—would be "Mud."

Cape Henry, Va.



TO THE PRESS OF AMERICA AND ENGLAND
A NEW CENTURY GREETING!

Bright beacon lights of Liberty
Firm set on Freedom's shore;
Brave outer guards of human weal,
Who can thy worth ignore?

Thy serial ranks formidable
Break on the world's great stage,
And mightier far than hosts of war
The might of thy printed page.

ST. MICHAEL'S BELLS.

Great silent ones of graven thought!
We bless thy goodly sway.
Before thee powers of evil pale
And fade in fright away.

All hail the might of "black and white"!
That prompts our joy or tears;
Here's wishing you a larger life
In the coming "hundred years"!



ST. MICHAEL'S BELLS.

Welcome as answer to some earnest prayer,
In memory's temple breaks melody rare
 From bells of the saintly name,
 Bells of the ancient fame,
 Bells of the stately dame
 Charleston, the fair.

And the heart beats in cadence to mem'ry's refrain,
And bells of St. Michael's I hear thee again
 Melody dealing,
 Heavenward stealing,
 For souls appealing!
 Appeal not in vain.

Waking still Sabbaths with soft melody,
Tuning heart strings to their sweet harmony,
Soul incense flinging,
Balm in their ringing,
Plaintively singing
To sad souls of men.

Chimes of the chaste church which rears o'er the sod
A shrine where sweet Faith holds communion with God;
Long may thy music rare
Burst on the amor'us air
Eager to waft thy prayer
Up, up, to God.

In dreams now I hear them yet, seeming to say
Return thou again to thy childhood's sweet day;
For false is the seeming,
And vain is the scheming,
And idle the dreaming
On Vanity's way.

Plaintive thy melody, sad is thy song,
Pleading the cause of the right 'mid the wrong;
Tolling in sadness,
Pealing in gladness,
Clashing in madness,
While years speed along.

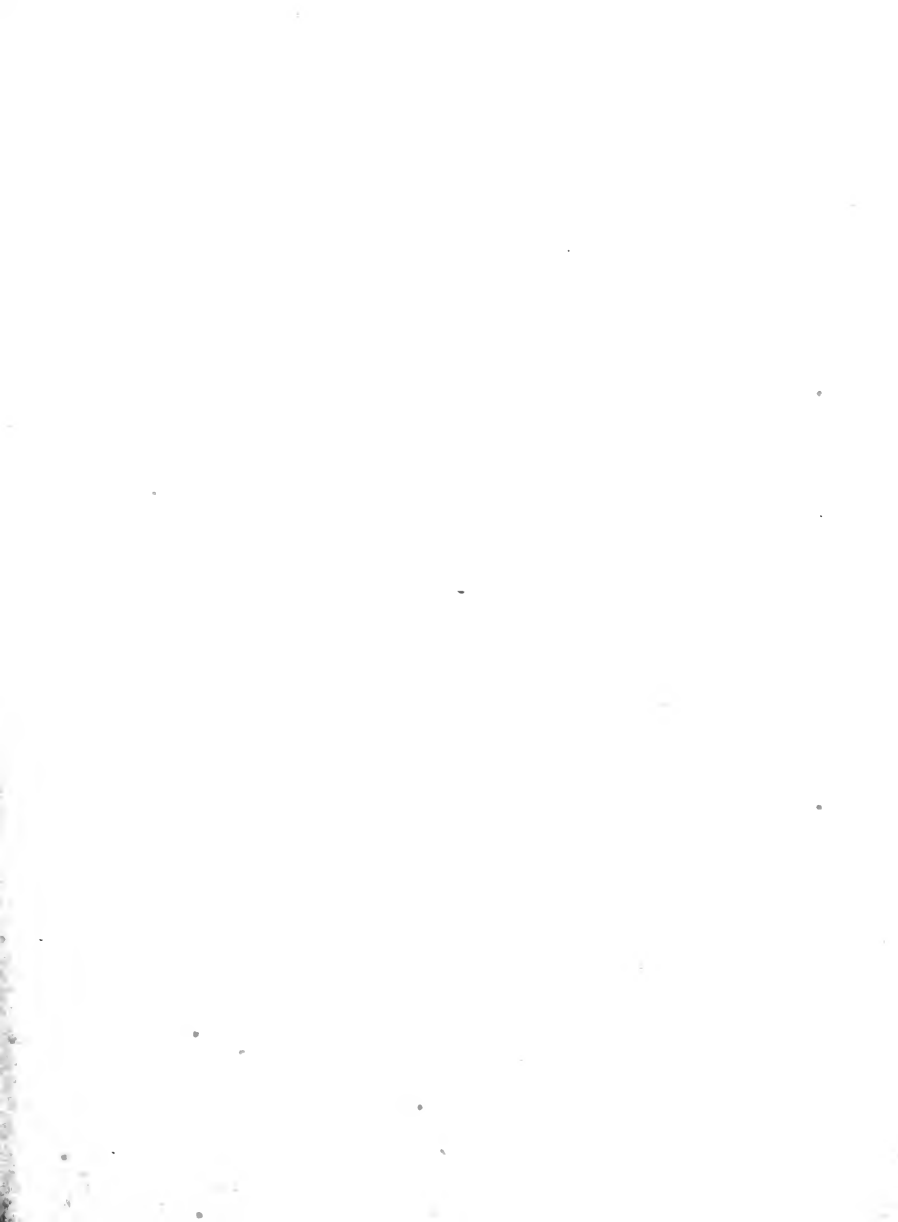
Bells of that summer land kissing the sea,
Often in dreams comes thy music to me;
Bearing a message from days that were bright
With pictures of hope that have passed.

The story of St. Michael's Church and its famous chimes antedates the history of this country as an independent nation. These sweet bells, apart and aside from their romantic and remarkable record, have a charm which belongs to them alone, and the average Charlestonian never fully appreciates their worth and pure melody until he hears the so-called chimes of other American cities. Travelers indeed assert that they are unsurpassed by any of the famous bells of the old world.



BEFORE DEATH COMES.

Because the darkness gathers nigh,
And vice and sin hold deadly sway;
Forget not—"all that live must die."
Must face the light of God's own day.
Thy prayer at rise or set of sun
From contrite heart, "Thy will be done."





“Melody dealing, Heavenward stealing.”—*Page 112.*

He that marks the dumb brute's pain,
Will heed our lone despairing cry;
Righteous tears fall not in vain,
In Heaven is heard the mourner's sigh.
He that heeds the sparrow's fall
Is Lord of one and Lord of all.

And He will bless. Make no mistake
The bread that ye in mercy share,
The heart ye bear for pity's sake,
The rags ye now for virtue wear.
A portion in His love to claim
For cross ye bear in His dear name.

Thou that nailed the door of conscience,
From thy heart barred out remorse,
Thou shalt know when thou art torn hence,
What thy gain—and what thy loss.
Thou shalt reap as thou hast sown,
That harvest will be all thine own.

Is restitution in thy power,
What restoration canst thou make?
Or thinkest thou to wait the hour
When death shall thy dull conscience wake?
Too late! At last thy gold will fail
When from his face Death draws the veil.

"UNDER TWO FLAGS."

Britannia in her mighty morning
Chose cross set flag of triple hue;
Columbia chose for her adorning
The white starred one of red and blue.
Renown and Glory smiled on each,
And Hope is ever in our reach,
And Freedom never fears,
While floats the Flag of the Century,
And the one of the Thousand Years.

And while they hold secure their sway,
The race must tread a better way
To the goal of better men.
So good, indeed, are these flags to see,
The one in its pride of a Century,
And the one with the pride of Ten.



FLITTING FANCIES.

A desultory discourse on diverse subjects, continued.

I often wonder, sometimes fret
At bounds that seem eternal set
To keep us under.
Why should yon man of little soul
The best things of the earth control?
I often wonder.

Give me the man whose soul aspires
To better things; who sometimes fires
With righteous indignation.
It does me good to note the grace
That beams about his honest face
Amid contamination.

The world is wide, but not all free
As you may very plainly see
By observation.
Only 'neath the flag of stars
Only 'neath St. George's bars
Is Freedom's station.

Here to-day, to-morrow gone!
How vain then 'tis to sit forlorn
And trouble borrow.
Joy while you may, too soon may come
The admonition—drear and dumb
“Worm’s meat to-morrow.”

The secret of “poetic pains”
The dictionary’s lore contains,
And here’s the test;
The words are there to pick and choose,
Take simply those you want to use
And leave the rest.

So get Friend Webster’s dictionary,
A quire or so of stationery,
And ere you have begun
Your Muse will come down from the skies,
And very soon to your surprise,
You’ll find your poem done.

Misfortune lurking in the gloom,
Awaits our coming sure as doom;
In vain we turn to flee;
We cannot pass nor yet return
Until the price we sadly learn
And pay Misfortune’s fee.

A little further on we find
A watcher of a similar kind,
Indeed a close relation.
He stands and bars our further way,
Nor may we pass until we pay
Some toll to Tribulation.

Then picking up our heavy load,
With saddened hearts we take our road
And tread indeed despairing;
Until there at the parting ways
Good Fortune stands, before our gaze
A smile of welcome wearing.

Great sisters of the western world!
With banners to the winds unfurled;
In modern progress dressed.
Ye have not met the Spoiler dire!
Not all have been tried in the fire
And stood its searching test.

The Earthquake's devastating path;
The stress of War, the Storm-king's wrath,
Tried one of you in vain!
Serenely set by summer seas,
With ensign still flung to the breeze,
Lo! Charleston! free of stain.

Above the blows of careless Chance,
Surmounting unkind Circumstance,
Stemming their endeavor;
Superior to the fiat of Fate;
Reposeful in her fair estate,
May she live forever.

The wealth of bliss in lover's kiss,
Makes beggars all of those who miss
That inspiration.
It holds a charm quite all its own
Of which no counterfeit is known,
No imitation.

How pleasing 'tis to sometimes feel
That in this world of woe and weal
Some few may understand us.
If 'twere not so we could not know,
Nor yet discern a friend from foe
Nor where their ire might land us.

This gentle beast so full of love
They say no portion has above!
I understand it not.
Though sanctioned not by priest or pope
I hold it is no wanton hope
That it may share my lot.

Yon toiling, weary, meek eyed brute,
May mask some human soul held mute
By heavenly dispensation.
Some idle wench, some lady fair
Some erstwhile haughty millionaire
In stern and hard probation.

Disdainful of my humble verse
I see my critic cold and terse,
Pick flaws and slips.
But of all tasks—I do surmise
The easiest is to criticise,
By pen or lips.

And envy is a thing that's prone
To seek for faults and faults alone,
All else ignoring.
To see the good, the fair intent,
The soul that is to kindness bent
Needs no imploring.

Nay! Tell me not my knowing friend,
That poets number to the end
Their days in destitution?
The offerings of the heart, the mind,
Though scattered far to every wind
Will find some restitution.

Much indeed my soul doth yearn
To gather knowledge, and to learn
At wisdom's invitation.
Oh, that I might from want be free!
To rise above obscurity;
What happy consummation.

The rabble's praise is easy won,
A ribald jest, a stupid pun
Will gain their acclamation.
Whate'er the work my pen has wrought,
It brings content to know I sought
The better approbation.



CHILDREN OF CAIN.

Oh, Man! beneath thy baneful sway,
All blessings have been turned
To curses; while on nature's face
Thy hellish brands are burned.
Oh grotesque Brute! dare thou to tell
Self flattering—that there is no hell?



“And they who once have seen her face,
Strange benisons are granted.”—*Page 127.*

Vain of what thou should'st deplore,
Puffed up in thy petty pride,
Content on a barren shore
When Heaven's gates are open wide.
Oh, Man, without the saving grace
Thou art a sore on Nature's face.

In wanton sport, for fashion's freak
Thy cruel gun makes deadly sting;
A song bird decked in plumage rare
Falls a mangled, quivering thing.
But Death himself hath tipped his dart
With bitter poison for thy heart.

But coward Man! Thou never can
The larger of God's creatures face,
Unless with murderous weapons armed
In some secure and ambushed place.
Thy vaunted courage to a gasp
Doth turn, within the Leopard's grasp.

The best use which thy hellish bolts
Are ever made to work
Is when they're turned against thy kind;
'Tis then thou should'st not shirk
To slay and maim with all thy might
For earth breathes easier at the sight.

Pathetic, famished creatures toil
Beneath thy cruel curse and blow,
That thou may'st reap ungodly spoil;
Their groans fill all the earth below.
But even now God's bolt is sped
That shall break on thy cursed head.

The swiftest flight thy engines make
The eagle's wing doth flout it,
And all thy bluster and thy brag
He moves serene without it.
And dwells aloft in solitude,
Above thee and thy bragging brood.

On carcasses of lesser beasts
Thou gorgest, 'till thou art revealed
In fury of thy naked lust
A hideous monster, unconcealed.
A realm of brutes this earthly ball,
But thou art greatest brute of all.

Wealth from slaughter, wealth from spoil,
Wooing gain that brings a curse;
Wrung from wretched slaves of toil,
And Business! masks thy deed perverse.
Oh, Business! "name that's known well
In the dark lexicon of Hell."

To stem thy sin and lustful thirst,
And swerve thee from thy quick return
To Hell, from whence thou came at first,
The Lord hath set some lights to burn.
Masked in thy shape some angels dwell
The only bar 'twixt thee and Hell.

And though some heed, the many spurn
The patient few, who stand within
His grace, and keep His lamps to burn
Against the blasts of vice and sin.
The patient few who constant grieve
For thou, Hell's dreadful gift to Eve.



TO A SYMPATHETIC STRANGER.

Being an answer to a condolence in verse.

What more could touch a poet's heart,
Or quicker make the tear drops start
Than sympathy by Muse's art

Expressed in verse?

E'en though their burden bears a smart
As I rehearse.

Your sentiment of "Love's Bouquet"
Will touch my heart for many a day,
No matter where I bide or stray;

'Twill be impressed

The bud the angels bore away
We loved the best.

And so, my gentle unknown friend,
I feel the healing balm you lend,
And would some pleasant hour spend
 To listen to thy creed.
Until that time, these lines I send
 To thank you well indeed.

The sea of turmoil, tide of tears,
Breaks madly o'er our hopes and fears;
Sad, sad the mystery appears,
 For light we crave,
But little comes; and little cheers
 O'er some loved grave.

Yet do we cherish in our souls,
Despite of tribulation's tolls,
That life is but the tide which rolls
 On some serene To-morrow;
The tide which God-directed rolls,
 On some *divinelier* 'morrow.

God bless you friend who blessed my child,
May life for you be sweet and mild;
And may my darling undefiled
 Meet us upon that shore,
Beyond life's ocean rough and wild,
 Where pilgrims part no more.

MODERN WRITERS AND REVIEWERS.

“The age culls simples
With a broad clown’s back turned broadly
To the glory of the stars.”

* * * *

Mount of Parnassus! Poet’s mystic soil,
Whereof we dream, wherefore we ply our toil;
Thy groves are ravaged, and thy Muse’s hymn
To tatters torn by the vandal’s vim.
And noxious weeds are with thy flowers entwined,
Thy peaceful pathways to the mob consigned;
Thy temple’s tainted with pollution’s touch,
It’s shining symbols in the caitiff’s clutch.
The mandate that would rout this raucous band
Must bear the imprint of a master hand;
But where is he! who shall the challenge shout
To put this mob to ignominious rout ?

Columbia! Sweet bride of Liberty,
I would not give one needless pang to thee;
But thou must sorrow for those golden days,
When matchless prose blent with thy poet’s praise.
When Bryant built his fame on beauty’s base,
And Irving charmed our world wide Saxon race.
When Webster from a giant trophies rung,
And o’er the land his flashing brilliance flung.
And Paine, that shining light of Freedom’s lover,

Dealt kings a blow from which they'll ne'er recover.
Susceptive Poe, who shrank at blockhead's rant,
To Ingersoll who braved the hosts of cant.
All gone, alas! and in the land they graced,
The gentle Muses by a wild mob chased;
The scribblers charging with their vain alarms,
Make empty kitchens and neglected farms.
Upon the right a howling host of "lyrics,"
And on the left a mob of morbid "critics";
And 'tween these ranks a fearful gazing few,
Who know not where to turn, nor what to do.
'Mid printing presses, paper mills and ink,
The poor untutored remnant scarce can think.

Negro "poets" annihilate the tongue,
And rhyme their cake walks where Longfellow sung.
And bruiser Jeffries treads my Shakespeare's stage,
With strenuous fervor and "Poetic rage."
Some Georgia poet of his "melon" sings,
And rant and rhyming o'er the nation rings.

Some chap that sells his soap upon the street,
Breaks into verse and does your ear entreat;
And when you will not list his "soulful" sigh,
He publishes his paper for your eye.
Songwriters vile, our wearied nerves assail
With tawdry melody or dismal wail.
Those chaps who write, they claim "to please the masses,"
And not (as if they could), "to please the classes";
Hence printing presses working overtime
For maudlin music set to motley rhyme.

A startling "genius" finds "a tired head"
Makes rhythmic music with "to bed, to bed!"
Inspired maidens, and whole college crews,
And idle ladies, woo the tired Muse.
Assuming airs that nauseate the wise
Some empty youngster for distinction tries.
The time's incompetence is plainly seen
Upon the pages of each magazine.
And some "light" furnishes the "latest novel,"
Who should be toiling with a pick and shovel.
The Navy, once renowned for rippling curses,
Brings forth a Tar, who writes a "book of verses";
Who many a salty inspiration caught
'Mid strong "head winds," and grievous "list to port."
No way sequestered and no path secure
From trash and rubbish which we must endure.

Some vain dramatic tinker, tried and true,
Delights the masses and disgusts the few;
Oh, why will people their poor rubbish choose,
Grasp gaudy gilt, and purest gold refuse?
Now Hamlet speaks his lines to empty stalls,
While "horse play" packs and jams the bursting walls;
The audience their wishes emphasize,
Applaud pollution, and worth "patronize."
So sorry substance in a gaudy dress
Is fitted to their mental feebleness.
But yet be thankful for the goodly few,
Who bow to merit and give worth its due.

Sad shades of Shakespeare, Pope and Thomas Moore!
Tread their old haunts, and modern dross deplore;
And wonder when the world will frame a song
To bear the burden of their strain along.
Beset by rhymsters, lacking needful pelf,
Sometime perchance, I'll turn the trick myself;
Folks looking round to find the one who wrought it
And finding me, will murmur "who'd a thought it?"

Ye ancient bards, who set the world ablaze!
Presumptuous he who writes these simple lays.
Yet though unworthy in thy mighty view,
In one respect he beats the best of you;
No scratching pen for him! nor ink pot mean,
He writes his poetry on a "Yost" machine.

Some perverse power and unconscious chance
Alike on mortals break their wanton lance;
And wisdom, frequent fool of that same fate,
That fools with fortune often compensate.
A language teacher scarcely can exist,
A "ball" man's paid a fortune for his "twist."
Miss Scandalous draws furs around her form,
While Virtue lacks the rags to keep her warm.

Oh, Age of Tinsel! Age of strange device!
Our lamentations and our tears entice;
For each unmeasured strain bears evidence
Of soulless precept and of want of sense.





“Soft eyes--that soothe my soul's unrest.”—*Page 173.*

The self same metal, but a different touch,
To form an axle and to make a watch;
Yet still we see despite of nature's plan
Some soulful goal sought by a soulless man.
And here a "poet," there a man of "letters,"
Attempting what he should leave to his betters.

Persistent "writers" whom no frown could tame,
By publishers are passed to fading fame;
Undaunted stands the "literary" crew,
And faith, there's nothing left for me and you.
And 'mid a mass of mediocrity
Meek talent seeks in vain for sympathy.
Satiric power it were vain to ask,
For Momus stands appalled at the great task.

Persistent poachers in the paths of prose!
Your thieving aptness every writing shows.
Vulgar intruders in the realms of rhyme!
Here's at you all! I know no better time.
And though I shortly may in vain repent
This terse and timely admonition lent,
Yet still my Muse impels the thankless task,
And when she bids, no respite may I ask.

I sometimes dream of that sweet, happy age,
When fools will vanish from this earthly stage;
When all the world with wisdom will be crowned,
And right, and love, and beauty will abound;
When men will cease their panting race for pelf;
But then—alas! I will be dead myself.

But oh, to live in that divinelier age
When man will reap his rightful heritage.
When Poet's volumes will be bound in gold
And angel readers all their charms unfold;
When daily items we will read from Mars,
And hold wise converse with more distant stars.
When every soul that comes unto the earth
Will mark a Prince and not a pauper's birth.
When each will fill his own appointed place
And no one seek to foul his neighbor's race.
But now we murmur at the prospect drear,
For fools still venture where the angels fear.

Forbear, oh thou vain man! of little art,
To voice a song that is not in thy heart.
Nor seek to swell some heavenly anthem's chord,
To which thy puny soul does not accord.
Nor dare assume the aspect of a saint
And think to mask thy world deceit and taint,
Nor in the clammy arms of vice to take
Fair virtue for thine own, for her sweet sake.

With touch that knows but shoddy, thou dost tear
The silken fabric that the Muses wear.
With rough shod feet, no incense in thy hands,
Thou seekest temples in enchanted lands.
Unqualified, ungodly and untaught,
Still dare to seek the secret soul of thought.
And sound the depths of beauty's boundless flood
From out the shallows of a stream of mud.
From snare of lies, that knows nor calm, nor ruth,
Thou would'st assume the shining robe of Truth!

Fame's beacon lures! thou canst not follow it
Ashore on shoals of thy poor shallow wit;
And seeing better pilots pass thee by,
To foul their passage thou dost vainly try.
Infernal Envy! oft' we feel his spell,
That hateful harbinger of horrid hell!

The Muse's favorites are not thy kind,
Their gifts not tossed to every careless wind;
They pass the "pompous," no "purse proud" endow,
And place their garlands on some modest brow.
The dainty domain where the Muses dwell,
Holds Beauty's bower, and fair Wisdom's well;
And those who seek an entrance there to gain,
Must walk in modesty and bear no stain.
The shallow pretense and the petty pride
Within that wondrous realm cannot abide.
Presumption there no edifice may rear,
No din discordant jars the tuneful ear.
But thou! that can'st the gentle Muse entice,
Heed well these lines which deck some small advice;
Advice that's cheap and therefore freely given
To pave thy way aright, perchance to Heaven.
Take Wisdom to thy heart and clasp her close,
Sift through discernment's sieve the dust of dross.
Be quick to learn from every source some lesson,
Give goodly thoughts the goodliest expression.
And be assured, oh, thou aspiring youth,
To be a poet thou must tell the truth.

Fear thou base flattery as a foul thing,
Let poetasters to its false words cling;
To worth it adds not in the least degree,
To tyros leave it, it is not for thee.
And good or bad thy lines—the test will show it
False praise or hate despite; the wise will know it.
Leave fools to flatt'ry which on folly feeds,
And fence thy flowers from a world of weeds.
Nor deem the praise of some corrupted sheet
That knows naught but the "wisdom" of the street,
Availeth aught a Poet's work to laud!
For gutter garlands are a graceless gaud.

Before thy service in the Muse's "guards,"
Read "Byron's "Horace," likewise "English Bards;"
And finding naught to dampen thy ambition—
A Poet thou! whatever thy condition.
Far better one than I, who pen this lay
To rack the follies of **my** little day,
Which done, I'll wait my ship, that long I've sought,
My phantom ship afloat on tides of thought.



MELANCHOLY'S MUSING.

This life may be a gladsome round
Of love and beauty blended,
But even in its happiest hour
We sigh for joys long ended,
And stop 'mid laughter, song and play,
To mourn for some dead yesterday.

Fame's dazzling star serenely shines
And lures another wooer,
Yet even as its lustre burns
The dark begins to lower.
And many curse their lofty aim
Who court the fickle star of Fame.

The light that lights the lover's eye
Sheds radiance celestial,
Yet love's pure flame oft' serves to fire
A lust that's all terrestrial.
And heavenly pictures lovers paint
Too oft' are touched with worldly taint.

The spring time charms, and fettered feet
Would fain find fancy's goal,
But springtime longing in the heart
Makes sadness in the soul;
For 'mid life's artificial frost
We feel its wealth of sunshine lost.

The peace that friendship still imparts
Is ours so long the fates are fair,
But let them frown, then seek the hand
Late at our side—it is not there!
For friendship's reared on golden sands,
And storm waves beat at last all strands.

But thou sweet Faith, that lights the night
Of gloom, when souls with grief are torn.
Thy star's not dim, my aching sight
Full long thy radiance hath borne.
Last friend and best! thy feet Hope shod,
Leave prints that point the path to God.



LOVE'S ADMIRATION.

The glow of soul shine in thine eyes
With angel's might compare,
For richer than rich summer skies
The wealth of love light there.
And thy divinely beauteous brow,
And form of rarest grace,
Might match a Seraph's, and endow
That Seraph's glorious place.

Bright eyes that beam celestial light
Like some twin stars of Heaven,
Pure as the stream from snowy height
That knows no earthy leaven.
Soft eyes—that soothe my soul's unrest
With pledge of Paradise,
Beneath their beams I'm wondrous blest,
Their love light doth suffice.

Thy voice is like sweet music rare
That breaks o'er scenes enchanted,
Thy tenderness like morn's fresh air
To prisoned pilgrims granted.
Thou art as some half opened rose,
That nods the day farewell,
The witchery thy charms disclose,
I feel, but cannot tell.

There's rapture in thy pensive eye,
There's music in thy laughter;
There's Heaven in thy sympathy,
And sigh that follows after.
All fret beneath thy glance is stilled,
Thy "Cupid's bow" is token
Of promises all unfulfilled,
And yet withal—unbroken.

Then let me guide thy steps, sweet love
Along life's rugged way,
And ne'er a pilot false I'll prove
To lead such feet astray.
I'll lift thee o'er the ills of life,
And deem the burden blest,
If thou wilt be mine own sweet wife—
My loved and life-long guest.

THE RAPE OF THE MUSE.

Dedicated to a Bard in Black and His Book.

A Ballad.

Of Ephraim and his idols,
Of those who always "ape";
Of him who stormed the Muse's fane,
(I tell it 'mid my tears and pain)
And there committed rape.

'Mid classic glens of Greensboro
In the famous Old North State,
Way "down home" in that tar heel town,
Was reared a youth of wide renown,
And learning deep and great.

So sing, O Muse! of E-phra-im,
Of Ephraim Mc.Girt,
Who boldly scaled Parnassus Hill
And laid its sentries cold and still,
Upon their native dirt.

For "Ephum" is a "poet" rare,
Of color, depth and vigor;
And it's a black plume in his hat
When to the world it's known that
Our "Ephum" is a nigger.

And if there is distinction
In last as well as first,
He's gained the rhymster's crown of fame,
And made himself an envied name,
By being the very worst.

With dreams of fame and lordly state,
The Muse his odalisque;
He sought Erato's marble hall,
And with his Senegambian gall
Did that which few would risk.

"Fair maid, I've come to woo and win,
I waive all 'race objection';
For if I'm not as white as snow,
The blame's not mine I'd have you know,
The fault is my complexion.

"Nay! frown not on my dusky skin,
For I'll not be abused Miss!
On Poet's wiles you shed your smiles,
I've fought my way o'er guarded stiles,
And I'll not be refused Miss!"

In vain her fair face flushed with shame,
In vain she called down curses;
Like others who have shamed his race
This "coon" defiled that sacred place,
And fathered mongrel verses.

Wherefore, O Byron, stand aside,
And Burns go hide your head;
For Lo! comes Ephraim Mc.Girt,
With sabre, gun, and bloody shirt,
To make you glad you're dead.

And Poe, and Moore and Milton, too,
'Tis well you all have died;
For had you lived until this hour
And saw this "moke" in Musedom's bower,
You'd rush to suicide.

For you'd dread the times a coming
Born of "philanthropic" schools,
When "coons" will all be "literary,"
And wenches wise, and "airy fairy"
And the "white folks" driving mules.

But "Ephum" more in sorrow
Than in anger do I say,
That you have writ the rankest rhymes,
Of modern or of ancient times
By long odds and away.

For we judge your verses, Ephraim
Without envy, hate or spleen,
To be the vilest verses—
The most ungodly verses—
That the world has ever seen.

Perhaps, as you say, my "Ephum,"
'Tis not your fault indeed,
But while your gall is most superb,
We grieve to think you did not curb
Your wild Parnassian steed.

For the beggar's gone and bolted clean,
Against all reins and rules,
And dashed you out on Funny Street,
And kicked you into Dolt's Retreat,
In the Paradise of Fools.

And there's no resurrection
From that place you've reached at last,
For if you venture out you'll find
The frigid face, and words unkind,
And the critic's cruel blast.

Yet not alone for you Mc.Gint,
This long descant of mine;
I'll feel my trouble well repaid
If kept some boot black at his trade,
Some laundress at her line.

And this is why I step between
Poor Ephraim and his gods,
For half the country's population
Could write as well with slight temptation.
Then who would tote our hods?

But be not scared my "Ephum,"
For you no rope's in store;
For though you tore the dainty Muse,
And did her pleading cries refuse,
She's not known in the law.

'Tis not your color Ephraim,
That prompts our scorn, we vow,
But we refuse with righteous frown
To place the Poet's stately crown
Upon a buffoon's brow.

We yield full praise to merit,
Give worth its honest due,
But the raw and ranting rhymster,
The dreary "darkey" rhymster,
Makes us both mad and blue.

Scarce challenged now the rampant "coon"
Doth ape and mock the nation;
But when he claims to be a "poet"
By Heavens above! he'll have to show it
Or stay in Coondom's station.

Now some may say to spite I lean,
And judge my lay a—lie;
But books are food for critics keen,
So E-phra-im must take I ween
His dose, as well as I.

THE MARRIAGE OF HUNGER AND THIRST.

When Hell's adventurous Chief set forth
On the journey that ended here,
There followed right after
With hideous laughter,
Fell fiends their standards to rear.
And many the monsters new scenes to imbibe,
That traversed the track of this terrible tribe.

And Madness and Torment, Poverty, Wealth,
Were loosed o'er the shivering earth;
And a house warming revel
Was held by the Devil;
And Rapine and Havoc had birth.
And Death turned the furrows, and Sin sowed the wind,
And planted the plagues that have poisoned mankind.

The hell hound named Hunger took Thirst by the hand,
And whispered these words in her ear,
"I think if we'd marry
No mortal could parry
The thrust of our pain tempered spear."
And so came the marriage by men ever curst,
The maledict marriage of Hunger and Thirst.

This withering pair breathed a blight on the air,
And manifold multitudes paled:
And Death, the grim reaper,
Recked not of the weeper,
Or the cowering wretches that quailed;
Nor heeded the wail of their "unpardoned sin,"
But grimly, right grimly—he gathered them in.

And Hunger and Thirst racked body and soul,
And Pain and Disease lent a hand;
These furies well mated
Were never yet sated,
Though gorged with the best of the land.
And finding mankind not enough for their feast,
They seized on the insect, the bird and the beast.

But brief is their revel, thank God comes the day
When back to Hell's pit they'll be hurled!
And Satan, King sinner,
Will not be the winner
When Judgment morn breaks on the world.
His hell hosts shall shrink at the Archangel's sword,
And wither and perish at "glance of the Lord!"
Appalled they will perish at "glance of the Lord!"



DOMINUS VOBISCUM.

Pilgrims of morning, pilgrims of night,
Under the stars and the sun;
Chasing vain phantoms or seeking the light,
Soon, soon may thy journey be done.
Seek Him like the seers who followed the star,
 Dominus Vobiscum!
 Au revoir.

“God be with you 'till we meet again,”
Yea, even though 'tween us may fall
The silence deep. No brand of Cain
Be ours to proffer at His call.
Not ours the cause of truth to mar,
 Dominus Vobiscum!
 Au revoir.

Coming and going, so strangely we meet,
To act and re-act on our kind;
On desolate highway or populous street,
Restless we pass, like the wind.
To you! fellow pilgrim, near or afar,
 Dominus Vobiscum!
 Au revoir.

May-2, 1801

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